U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Wyoming State Office
5353 Yellowstone Road
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009

December 2025

Greater Sage-Grouse Rangewide Planning

Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan Amendment for Wyoming

DOI-BLM-WO-2300-2022-0001-RMP-EIS

https://www.blm.gov/programs/fish-and-wildlife/sage-grouse

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Lower Bar Photos (left to right):

US Fish and Wildlife, Rachel Woita, James Yule

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and
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Cooperating Agencies

United States Forest Service
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency
Big Horn County Commissioners
Campbell County Commissioners
Campbell County Conservation District
Carbon County Commissioners
Converse County Commissioners
Converse County Conservation District
Crook County Commissioners
Fremont County Commissioners
Hot Springs County Commissioners
Johnson County Commissioners
Laramie Rivers Conservation District
Lincoln County Commissioners
Lincoln Conservation District
Lingle-Fort Laramie Conservation District
Lower Wind River Conservation District
Medicine Bow Conservation District
Meeteetse Conservation District
Natrona County Commissioners
Niobrara County Commissioners
Park County Commissioners
Popo Agie Conservation District
Saratoga-Encampment-Rawlins Conservation District
Sheridan County Commissioners
South Big Horn Conservation District
Shoshone Conservation District
State of Wyoming
Wyoming Department of Agriculture
Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission
Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office
Wyoming State Parks and Cultural Resources
Wyoming State Forestry
Wyoming Game and Fish Department
Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality
Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investment
Sublette County Conservation District
Sublette County
Sweetwater County Conservation District
Sweetwater County
Teton County Commissioners
Uinta County Conservation District
Uinta County
Washakie County Commissioners
Washakie County Conservation District
Weston County Commissioners

Dear Reader Letter

In reply refer to:
1610 (WY-930)
Greater Sage-Grouse Rangewide Planning

Dear Reader:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is pleased to announce the issuance of the Wyoming Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendment for the Greater Sage-Grouse (GRSG) Rangewide Planning in Wyoming. This document includes both the Wyoming ROD and the Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming portion of the planning area. The Wyoming ROD and Approved RMP Amendment, as well as all associated National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) documents, are available online on the BLM's National NEPA Register at: https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2016719/510.

The Proposed RMP Amendment/Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) was released on November 15, 2024, and was subject to a 30-day protest period that ended December 16, 2024. Resolution of protests is delegated to the BLM Assistant Director for Resources and Planning on behalf of the BLM Director. The BLM received 60 unique protest letters during the 30-day protest period. The resolutions of the protests are summarized in the BLM Director's Protest Resolution Report: Greater Sage-Grouse Rangewide Planning Proposed RMP Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement, which is available at: https://www.blm.gov/programs/planning-and-nepa/public-participation/protest-resolution-reports

Thank you for your interest in the Greater Sage-Grouse Rangewide Planning RMP Amendment. There are numerous values and concerns associated with the management of greater sage-grouse habitat across the West. We remain committed to implementing the policies and conservation measures that will meet the BLM's multiple-use and sustained yield mandate, provide for the habitat needs to conserve GRSG, avoid the need to list under the Endangered Species Act, and minimize long-term regulatory burdens. Your continued involvement in the management of public lands in Wyoming is invaluable in ensuring BLM management will sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of BLM-administered lands for present and future generations.

Sincerely,

KRISTINA KIRBY

Digitally signed by KRISTINA KIRBY
Date: 2025.12.19 11:27:59 -07'00'

Kristina Kirby
Acting Wyoming State Director
Bureau of Land Management

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Record of Decision

INTRODUCTION

This Wyoming Record of Decision (ROD) and Approved Resource Management Plan (RMP) Amendment amends a subset of greater sage-grouse (GRSG) goals, objectives, allocations and management direction in ten Bureau of Land Management (BLM) RMPs in Wyoming. Following is a list of the plans that are amended by BLM district:

High Plains District

- Buffalo Field Office RMP
- Casper Field Office RMP
- Newcastle Field Office RMP

High Desert District

- Kemmerer Field Office RMP
- Pinedale Field Office RMP
- Rawlins Field Office RMP
- Rock Springs Field Office RMP

Wind River Bighorn Basin District

- Cody Field Office RMP
- Lander Field Office RMP
- Worland Field Office RMP

This Approved RMP Amendment builds on the work that was completed in BLM's 2015 and 2019 GRSG RMP Amendments and responds to the loss of habitat and the declining population of GRSG, a ground-dwelling bird that was under consideration by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for protection under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). In Wyoming, state wildlife agencies, local agencies, federal agencies and many others interested in the health of GRSG populations and habitats have been collaborating to conserve the species since 2008. This Decision continues the collaborative approach to GRSG management in the state updated to incorporate new science and address emerging threats. Background on the prior GRSG planning processes can be found in the Greater Sage-Grouse Rangewide Planning Proposed RMP Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement (Final EIS) in Chapter 1.2 GRSG Planning Background. The Approved RMP Amendment provides BLM Wyoming with locally relevant management actions and allocations that achieve rangewide GRSG conservation goals consistent with the BLM's multiple use and sustained yield mission and in support of coordinated GRSG management efforts with federal, state, local, and Tribal partners.

The Wyoming Approved RMP Amendment amends language relating to the management of habitats important for sustaining GRSG populations in the state. This RMP Amendment identifies updated habitat management areas that allow for the application of habitat conservation in areas where it will be most beneficial and effective. Within these habitat management areas updated rangewide management direction for the following resource topics will be applied: utility scale solar and wind development; fluid, saleable, and non-energy leasable mineral development; major and minor rights-of-way (ROW) development; livestock grazing; wild horse and burros; predation; mitigation; disturbance cap; adaptive management; criteria based

management for non-habitat; updated habitat objectives and lek definitions, and an updated monitoring framework. Additionally, Wyoming BLM incorporated a new habitat designation identified by the state – Stewardship Habitat Management Areas (SHMA) – into this RMP Amendment.

Throughout this planning process, the BLM engaged with Tribes, cooperating agencies, and the public. BLM Wyoming worked closely with the state and other Wyoming cooperating agencies throughout this planning process discussing management direction and garnering feedback to strengthen the state-level relevance of the RMP Amendment. The signing of this Wyoming ROD represents the conclusion of this planning process in the State of Wyoming.

This ROD approves the BLM's proposal to implement the management direction presented in the attached Approved RMP Amendment in the Wyoming decision area. This Approved RMP Amendment was described as the Proposed RMP Amendment in the Greater Sage-Grouse Rangewide Planning Proposed RMP Amendment and Final EIS that was released on November 15, 2024, with clarifications and modifications made during the Governor's Consistency Review process and to align with changes in regulation and policy, as described in the **Clarifications and Modifications** section.

DECISION AREA

The planning area is the geographic area within which the BLM will make decisions. A planning area boundary includes all lands regardless of ownership, but the BLM can only make decisions on public lands and federal mineral estate within the agency's jurisdiction. This rangewide amendment planning area includes all lands within the boundaries of BLM field offices that contain GRSG habitat, excluding the Bi-state distinct population segment (DPS) and the Columbia Basin DPS, which are addressed in other planning efforts. The planning area for this RMP Amendment includes portions of California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming, as shown in **Appendix 1**, Table and Maps, Map 1, Planning Area.

The decision area includes the lands within the planning area for which the BLM has authority to make land use and management decisions, including areas where BLM administers subsurface minerals. In Wyoming the decision area for this Approved RMP Amendment applies to BLM-administered GRSG habitat management areas as shown in **Appendix 1**, Table and Maps, Map 2, Wyoming Decision Area. The Wyoming decision area includes approximately 26,605,738 acres (Table 1) of lands administered by BLM Wyoming located in 23 Wyoming counties: Albany, Big Horn, Campbell, Carbon, Converse, Crook, Fremont, Goshen, Hot Springs, Johnson, Laramie, Lincoln, Natrona, Niobrara, Park, Platte, Sheridan, Sublette, Sweetwater, Teton, Uinta, Washakie, and Weston.

DECISION

The decision is hereby made to approve the attached Greater Sage-grouse Rangewide Planning Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming. This RMP Amendment was prepared under the regulations implementing the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA) (43 CFR Part 1600). An environmental impact statement was prepared for this RMP Amendment in compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969[1] and the planning regulations 43 CFR 161031-(b). The BLM selected the RMP

[1] The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA are rescinded, effective April 11, 2025. The BLM has complied with applicable procedures/ regulations, including DOI's procedures/regulations implementing NEPA at 43 CFR Part 46, to meet the agency's obligations under NEPA, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321 et seq.

Amendment after careful consideration of input from cooperating agencies, Tribes, the Governor of Wyoming, and the public.

The decisions contained in the RMP Amendment are expressed as goals, objectives, allocations, and management direction. The decisions identified in the RMP Amendment are final and effective when this ROD is signed. The decisions contained in the RMP Amendment recognize and are consistent with valid with existing rights. Future BLM decisions, including those that authorize third-party actions, would also be consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law. The decisions in this Approved RMP are planning-level decisions. Additional steps will be taken to implement on-the-ground activities and may require additional design, environmental review, mitigation, and monitoring. The BLM will prepare appropriate documentation where necessary to comply with NEPA when making implementation-level decisions.

The Proposed RMP Amendment and Final EIS did not reconsider all existing GRSG management actions in the 2015 and 2019 RMP Amendments consistent with BLM's planning criteria and purpose and need, detailed below. Management actions in the 2015 and 2019 RMP Amendments that are not amended will remain in place (refer to **Appendix 2**, Comparison of Prior Greater Sage-Grouse RMP Management Direction with Approved RMP Amendment).

PURPOSE AND NEED

As required by NEPA, the BLM identified the purpose and need for this RMP amendment and developed a range of alternatives to meet the purpose and need. The preliminary purpose and need statement in the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS was refined in the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS in response to cooperating agency and public input, and reads as follows:

The BLM's purpose is to amend certain goals, objectives, allocations, and management direction for GRSG management in its RMPs to respond to updated scientific information and changing land uses and provide for consistent and effective rangewide conservation based on biological information that is responsive to locally relevant habitat variability. Following an internal review of the effectiveness of 2015 and 2019 RMPs Amendment decisions, including the degree to which those decisions sufficiently addressed threats to GRSG habitats and continued population declines, while balancing the BLM's ability to manage public lands for other uses, and as informed by updated scientific findings and feedback received from Tribal, federal, state, and local agencies and the public during the scoping period, the BLM proposes to amend the following RMP elements:

- Clarify the existing GRSG RMP goal
- GRSG habitat management area alignments to incorporate new science and improve alignment along state boundaries along with the associated major land use allocations, including management for non-habitat within habitat management areas
- Adoption of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) definition of "lek" and "lek status"
- Mitigation
- GRSG habitat objectives
- Disturbance caps
- Fluid mineral development and leasing objectives
- Fluid mineral leasing waivers, exceptions, and modifications (WEMs)
- Wind and Solar energy development
- ROWs

- Minimizing threats from predation
- Livestock grazing
- Wild horse and burro management
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Adaptive Management
- Increase consistency with the 2019 Greater Sage-Grouse Core Area Protection Executive Order (2019-3)

Some management concerns are localized to circumstances in individual States and the ecological diversity across the sagebrush ecosystem. As such, the purpose of this planning effort also includes amending specific RMP management actions associated with state-specific circumstances to facilitate GRSG habitat conservation efforts. Beyond the rangewide considerations detailed above, states considered additional targeted amendments to existing management direction. Each state determined the need to amend management actions independently and based on a review of updated scientific information, changing land uses, and locally relevant habitat variability. Management actions targeted for amendment in some states include saleable minerals, fire and fuels, vegetation and invasives, lands and realty actions, project screening, lek buffers, and interagency coordination. Inclusion of a management category for amendment in one state does not necessitate consideration of this category in other states or the consideration of the category rangewide. See Section 2.5 of the Final EIS, State-Specific Circumstances, for more information.

Section 102 of the FLPMA, as amended, establishes a congressional policy objective that[2] BLM manage public lands "in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, scenic, historical, ecological, environmental, air and atmospheric, water resource, and archeological values; that, where appropriate, will preserve and protect certain public lands in their natural condition; that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals; and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and use." BLM policy further directs the BLM to proactively initiate conservation measures and to minimize or avoid potential adverse effects to prevent decline of sensitive species. Specifically, the BLM's Wildlife and Fisheries Management Manual, M-6500, directs the BLM to "conserve rare, vulnerable, and representative habitats, plant communities, and ecosystems", with specific objectives to "develop and implement plans to ensure that the characteristics of rare, threatened, or representative habitat types are maintained." and to "collaborate with other agencies, the States, and private groups to ensure protection of the best representative habitats/ecosystem/plant communities for each area." The BLM's Special Status Species Management Manual, M-6840 (2008), states "the BLM shall designate Bureau sensitive species and implement measures to conserve these species and their habitats...to promote their conservation and reduce the likelihood and need for such species to be listed pursuant to the ESA." [3]

The BLM is therefore considering amending RMPs to:

- Address continued GRSG habitat losses, which can contribute to GRSG population declines. While GRSG populations experience natural fluctuations, monitoring indicates the most recent nadirs (low

[2] This sentence has been updated to more accurately describe Section 102 of the FLPMA. The purpose and need presented in the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS read "Section 102 of the FLPMA, as amended, requires the BLM to manage public lands…".

[3] The September 2024 revisions to Special Status Species Management Manual M-6840 were rescinded in December 2025. The associated quoted policy direction was therefore updated to reflect the language from the 2008 Manual. The intent of this statement, that it is BLM policy to minimize the need for listing under the ESA, has not changed.

point of population cycles) are lower than the prior nadirs in most states. The U.S. Geological Survey[4] analyzed state-collected lek data and reported estimated rangewide population declines of nearly 80 percent from 1966-2021 and of 41 percent from 2002-2021. While some GRSG populations are stable to increasing, over 87 percent of areas throughout the range had declining populations since 2002. The quantity and quality of available habitat, as well as non-habitat factors such as disruptive activities and prolonged drought can affect the size and trend of GRSG populations. Analyses of satellite data shows sagebrush availability across all land ownerships declined by approximately 3 percent (1.9 million acres) between 2012 and 2018. Nearly 60 percent of the sagebrush losses (approximately 1.1 million acres rangewide) occurred on BLM-administered lands. In the years 2016-2024, over 9.2 million acres[5] in sage-grouse range were burned by wildfire. Wildfire results in the greatest amount of direct habitat loss compared to other threats. This loss of habitat limits GRSG populations to smaller areas from which to obtain the needed habitat characteristics of food and cover. Constraining populations into smaller habitat areas accentuates impacts from other threats, which can then affect population trends. The BLM's 2021 *Greater Sage-Grouse Plan Implementation Rangewide Monitoring Report for 2015-2020*[6] identified 42 population triggers that had been tripped through 2020. Identifying, if possible, and responding to causal factors where population triggers have been tripped is critical to manage habitat to support state population objectives. In addition, habitat triggers were tripped sixteen times, attributable to sagebrush loss due to wildfires. The Monitoring Report estimated habitat loss of less than one percent in GRSG priority habitat management areas (PHMA) rangewide due to anthropogenic disturbance, although losses due to wildfire were more extensive. The anthropogenic loss on BLM lands is less than what scientific literature has identified as the threshold where GRSG abandon leks (Kirol et al. 2020). Disturbance from infrastructure in General Habitat Management Areas (GHMA) and other state-specific habitat management area designations averaged approximately 1.58 percent. To help address the continued losses of and impacts to habitat, the BLM proactively conducted sagebrush vegetation treatments on over 5.8 million acres[7] from 2016-2024. These included conifer removal, installation of fuel breaks, invasive species removal, habitat restoration, riparian restoration, and habitat protection.

- Ensure habitat management areas and associated decisions incorporate recent relevant science to prioritize management where it will provide conservation benefit and durability. Since the 2015 and 2019 planning efforts, hundreds of peer-reviewed scientific publications on GRSG and management of their habitats have been published, some of which are consistent with science the BLM previously considered while others identify new information. Several publications provide new spatial

[4] Coates, P.S., Prochazka, B.G., Aldridge, C.L., O'Donnell, M.S., Edmunds, D.R., Monroe, A.P., Hanser, S.E., Wiechman, L.A., and Chenaille, M.P., 2023, Rangewide population trend analysis for greater sage-grouse (*Centrocercus urophasianus*)—Updated 1960–2022: U.S. Geological Survey Data Report 1175, 17 p., https://doi.org/10.3133/dr1175.

[5] Total acres across the range of GRSG, including the Bi-State and Columbia Basin populations that are not included in this planning effort. Acres include all burned areas within the sage-grouse range maps, not limited to the RMP identified habitat management areas or just areas of sagebrush and sagebrush associated habitats. Acres are also inclusive of all ownerships, not just BLM-administered lands.

[6] Herren, V., E. Kachergis, A. Titolo, K. Mayne, S. Glazer, K. Lambert, B. Newman, and B. Franey. 2021. Greater sage-grouse plan implementation: Rangewide monitoring report for 2015–2020. U.S. Department of the Interior, Bureau of Land Management, Denver, CO.

[7] Acres include areas of treatment funded by the BLM. While these are largely on BLM-administered lands, funding often is used on non-BLM-administered lands adjacent to treatments on BLM-administered lands. In addition, these acres may include double-counting different treatments on the same acres (e.g., conifer removal, followed by seeding counts as two different types of treatments that may occur on the same acres).

information on important population and habitat parameters for GRSG. The BLM considered this new information and relevant science in developing and analyzing proposed management on BLM-administered lands.

ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

The Draft RMP Amendment and Draft EIS and the Proposed RMP Amendment and Final EIS considered a range of alternatives designed to meet the BLM's purpose and need to respond to updated scientific information and changing land uses and provide for consistent and effective rangewide GRSG conservation based on biological information that is responsive to locally relevant habitat variability (refer to Purpose and Need, Section 1.4.2 of the Final EIS). The Draft RMP Amendment and Draft EIS analyzed six alternatives. The Proposed RMP Amendment and Final EIS analyzed those same alternatives along with a seventh alternative, the Proposed RMP Amendment, which was developed using elements from the other alternatives and in response to public and cooperating agency comments on the Draft RMP Amendment and Draft EIS.

The Proposed RMP Amendment alternative in the Final EIS was within the range of the alternatives analyzed in the Draft EIS and did not represent new circumstances or information relevant to environmental concerns bearing on the proposed action or its impacts, could have been reasonably anticipated for consideration by the public, and was responsive to public and cooperating agency feedback received on the Draft RMP Amendment and Draft EIS. Therefore, the BLM determined that adding the Proposed RMP Amendment between the Draft EIS and Final EIS did not necessitate supplementation.

Following is a summary of the alternatives analyzed in the Final EIS. Section 2.3, Alternatives Considered but Not Analyzed in Detail in Chapter 2 of the Final EIS describes alternatives that were considered but not analyzed in detail.

Alternative 1 (Applicable Decisions from the 2015 Approved RMP Amendment)

Alternative 1 included the applicable decisions from the 2015 Approved RMP Amendments that are proposed for amendment under this planning effort. Due to the U.S. District Court of Idaho's preliminary injunction preventing implementation of the 2019 Approved RMP Amendments (refer to explanation in Alternative 2 summary below) the BLM is currently implementing the 2015 Approved RMP Amendment. This includes designation of some areas of PHMA as Sagebrush Focal Areas (SFA) with a recommendation to withdraw them from location and entry under the Mining Law of 1872. Additionally, each project resulting in disruption to or loss of GRSG habitat must be mitigated to provide a net conservation gain, which would require use of compensatory mitigation.

The variation in management decisions included in the 2015 Approved RMP Amendments among states was accounted for in the analyses comparing Alternatives. For BLM Wyoming, Alternative 1 included some variations from the rangewide decisions for fluid minerals, saleable minerals and materials, nonenergy leasable minerals, ROWs, mitigation, utility scale wind and solar, the disturbance cap, and waivers, exceptions and modifications. Reference Appendix 21 in the Final EIS for details on the Wyoming-specific variation accounted for in the analyses.

Alternative 2 – No Action (Applicable Decisions from the 2019 Approved RMP Amendment)

Alternative 2 is the No-Action Alternative and includes the applicable decisions from the 2019 GRSG RODs/Approved RMP Amendments except in Montana/Dakotas, which did not amend their RMPs in 2019. This is the No Action because it reflects the management language currently in the BLM's approved land use plans. The U.S. District Court for the District of Idaho has issued a preliminarily injunction, preventing the

BLM from implementing the 2019 amendments, but not vacating them or their RODs. Because the 2019 RODs/Approved RMP Amendments were not vacated, they are the existing approved management plans. Under this alternative the BLM would apply the management from the 2019 Approved RMP Amendment. SFAs would be removed from the BLM RMPs in all states except Oregon and Montana; these areas would still be managed with all the protections of PHMA but would no longer include a recommendation for withdrawal (including in the Oregon SFAs). For projects that result in disruption to or loss of GRSG habitat, projects would be managed to minimize or eliminate threats to GRSG, or to improve the condition of GRSG habitat across the planning area, only requiring compensatory mitigation if required by the State, federal law, or if volunteered by the proponent.

The variation in management decisions included in the 2019 Approved RMP Amendments among states was accounted for in the analyses comparing Alternatives. For BLM Wyoming, Alternative 2 included some variations from the rangewide decisions for fluid minerals, saleable minerals and materials, nonenergy leasable minerals, ROWs, mitigation, utility scale wind and solar, the disturbance cap, and waivers, exceptions and modifications. Reference Appendix 21 in the Final EIS for details on the Wyoming-specific variation accounted for in the analyses.

Alternative 3

Alternative 3 provided the most protective measures to preserve GRSG and its habitat of the alternatives analyzed. Alternative 3 would update the Habitat Management Area (HMA) boundaries based on new information and science that has become available since the 2015 and 2019 planning efforts. All HMAs would be managed as PHMA. The BLM would close PHMA to new fluid mineral leasing, saleable minerals/mineral materials permits, and nonenergy leasable minerals leasing (development associated with existing permits and leases would not be precluded). PHMA would be recommended for withdrawal from location and entry under the Mining Law of 1872 and unavailable for livestock grazing. PHMA would also be ROW exclusion areas. Where there are currently designated wild horse and burro herd management areas overlapping PHMA, the wild horse and burro herd management area would become a Herd Area that is not managed for wild horses and burros. Under Alternative 3, the BLM would designate 32 GRSG habitat ACECs.

For BLM Wyoming, Alternative 3 Included 636,352 acres of ACECs. Refer to Appendix 5 in the Final EIS for additional information.

Alternative 4

Alternative 4 would update the HMA boundaries and associated management based on new information and science that became available since the 2015 and 2019 efforts. While many of the allocations would be similar to Alternatives 1 and 2, the HMAs are updated to reflect new science. Under Alternative 4, in Wyoming, all PHMA would be managed with no surface occupancy stipulations for new oil and gas leases (all other states have this stipulation in PHMA in this and the other alternatives in the Proposed RMP Amendment). In addition, management associated with some of the major minimization measures (e.g., disturbance cap and adaptive management) is adjusted to address cross-boundary coordination of shared populations, rangewide biological and managerial concerns based on monitoring, and experience gained from implementing management for GRSG since 2015. Alternative 4 allowed compensatory mitigation to be used under specific conditions. Additional compensatory mitigation may be required where habitat and/or population adaptive management thresholds have been met. Areas previously identified as SFAs are generally managed as PHMA. The primary difference between management of SFAs in the 2015 Plans and PHMAs in this planning effort is that PHMA would not include a recommendation for withdrawal or prioritization strategies for oil and gas leasing and grazing permit renewals. For projects resulting in disruption to or loss of GRSG habitat, they

would be managed to at least achieve no net loss of GRSG habitat, which could include compensatory mitigation.

For BLM Wyoming, Alternative 4 included some variations from the rangewide decisions for saleable minerals and materials, nonenergy leasable minerals, and ROWs. Reference Appendix 21 in the Final EIS for details on the Wyoming-specific variation accounted for in the analyses.

Alternative 5

Alternative 5 was identified as the preferred alternative in the Draft EIS. Alternative 5 considers other potential alignments of habitat management areas and associated management to try to balance GRSG conservation with public land uses. If state governments updated the GRSG management area boundaries in their specific state plans, the BLM considered those boundaries on public lands in Alternative 5. HMAs are similar to but refined from Alternative 4 and restrictions would generally be similar to Alternative 4; with the exception of Wyoming which would follow the oil and gas management direction in Alternative 2; and the fact that Alternative 5 considered options with fewer restrictions on resource uses and provided more opportunities for considering compensatory mitigation to offset impacts on GRSG and its habitat than Alternative 4. Areas previously identified as SFAs are generally managed as PHMA. The primary difference between management of SFAs in the 2015 Plans and PHMAs in this planning effort is that PHMA would not include a recommendation for withdrawal or prioritization strategies for oil and gas leasing and grazing permit renewals. For projects resulting in disruption to or loss of GRSG habitat, similar to Alternative 4, they would be managed to at least achieve no net loss of GRSG habitat, which could include compensatory mitigation, but there would be more flexibility to when and how compensatory mitigation would be conducted.

For BLM Wyoming, Alternative 5 included some variations from the rangewide decisions for fluid minerals, saleable minerals and materials, nonenergy leasable minerals, ROWs, the disturbance cap, and waivers, exceptions and modifications. Reference Appendix 21 in the Final EIS for details on the Wyoming-specific variation accounted for in the analyses. BLM Wyoming included SHMA as a habitat designation managed the same as GHMA in Alternative 5.

Alternative 6

Under Alternative 6, management for all habitat management areas and the resource topics being considered in the range of alternatives would be the same as described for Alternative 5 except that under Alternative 6, 32 ACECs are proposed for designation. The same ACECs proposed for designation under Alternative 3 would be considered but the management direction for these areas would be less restrictive compared to Alternative 3.

For BLM Wyoming, Alternative 6 included 636,352 acres of ACECs and some variations from the rangewide decisions for fluid minerals, saleable minerals and materials, nonenergy leasable minerals, ROWs, the disturbance cap, and waivers, exceptions and modifications. Reference Appendices 5 and 21 in the Final EIS for details on the Wyoming-specific variation accounted for in the analyses. BLM Wyoming included SHMA as a habitat designation managed the same as GHMA in Alternative 6.

Proposed RMP Amendment

The Final EIS Proposed RMP Amendment increased protections for GRSG and its habitat from the Preferred Alternative (Alternative 5). For example, the Proposed RMP Amendment identified PHMA as exclusion for solar and wind, with specific exceptions. PHMA remained an avoidance area for major ROWs but the exceptions for allowing development are narrower than Alternative 5. These management actions in the

Proposed RMP Amendment are designed to provide the necessary protections for GRSG and its habitat in light of anticipated development threats and negative impacts from extreme weather conditions such as drought.

Since the Preferred Alternative in the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS, in the Proposed RMP Amendment in the Final EIS the BLM also increased protections in PHMA by adding additional detail on the processes and requirements for compensatory mitigation; adaptive management; and fluid minerals WEMs to promote rangewide consistency and ensure proper tracking.

For BLM Wyoming, the Proposed RMP Amendment included some variations from the rangewide decisions for fluid minerals, saleable minerals and materials, nonenergy leasable minerals, ROWs, the disturbance cap, and waivers, exceptions and modifications. BLM Wyoming included SHMA as a habitat designation managed the same as GHMA in the proposed RMP Amendment.

RATIONALE FOR DECISION

The Approved RMP Amendment provides a set of management directions that best meet the BLM's purpose of addressing updated scientific information and changing land uses, including information and uses not considered or addressed in the BLM's 2015 and 2019 amendments, while providing for consistent and effective rangewide GRSG conservation that is responsive to locally relevant habitat variability. The Approved RMP Amendment also best meets the need to address GRSG habitat loss, and the BLM believes this management approach is better than previous management. While GRSG populations experience natural fluctuations, monitoring indicates the most recent nadirs (low point of population cycles) are lower than the prior nadirs in most states. The BLM manages approximately half of the remaining GRSG habitats and between 2015 and 2020 nearly 60 percent (1.1 million acres) of all sagebrush losses (approximately 1.9 million acres rangewide) occurred on BLM-administered lands as a result of wildfire. The Approved RMP Amendment addresses this issue and provides new management that allows for the conservation of GRSG habitat while balancing the BLM's ability to manage public lands for other uses in accordance with FLPMA. The Approved RMP Amendment responds to statutes, regulations, and national policy, including Section 102 of FLPMA, BLM's Wildlife and Fisheries Management Manual, M-6500 and BLM's Special Status Species Management Manual, M-6840; Wyoming-specific habitat conditions and threats; and Wyoming state government GRSG policies and management priorities including the Greater Sage-Grouse Core Area Protection Executive Order 2019-3 (WY EO 2019-3). The Approved RMP Amendment reflects the high degree of collaboration and input received from the cooperating Federal, state, and local governments; the feedback received from Tribal governments; and from the over 39,000 public comments received on the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS. Specifically from Wyoming, 16 organizations submitted 360 substantive comments that contributed to this process. The Approved RMP Amendment provides the necessary protections for GRSG habitat in light of anticipated development threats and negative impacts from extreme weather conditions while also ensuring an appropriate balance of public land uses. For all the reasons included in this decision, the BLM believes the management approach in the Approved RMPA is better than the previous management set forth in the 2015 and 2019 amendments that is being amended.

The following sections describe the decision rationale for key components of the Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming. This includes how these components incorporate updated science and changing land uses, reduce habitat loss on BLM-administered lands, and incorporate feedback from Tribal, Federal, State, and local governments and the public in an effort to develop a plan that has durability across the GRSG range while responding to the specific habitat, development threats, and public land uses in the Wyoming planning area.

Habitat Management Areas

The Approved RMP Amendment will reduce habitat loss on BLM-administered lands by identifying updated HMAs where GRSG habitat conservation measures will be implemented in areas where it will provide the greatest conservation value for this species. These updated HMAs respond to updated monitoring and scientific data (e.g., Coates et al., 2021; Cross et al., 2018; Cross et al., 2022; Doherty et al., 2016; Oyler-McCance et al., 2022; Row et al. 2018; Palmquist et al., 2021; Rigge et al., 2021) and reflect the input of the Federal and state land management and wildlife management agencies across the ten-state planning area, including the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Within these habitat management areas, updated management direction to conserve GRSG habitat will be applied to: utility scale solar and wind development; fluid, saleable, non-energy leasable mineral development; major and minor ROW development; livestock grazing; wild horse and burros; predation; mitigation; disturbance cap; adaptive management; criteria-based management for non-habitat; and updated habitat objectives and lek definitions. Additionally, Wyoming is including management direction for SHMAs as detailed below.

The Approved RMP Amendment identifies two rangewide habitat management areas, PHMA) and GHMA, and the Wyoming-specific Stewardship Habitat Management Areas (SHMA) that responds to local habitat priorities. PHMAs have the highest value to maintaining sustainable GRSG populations and can include breeding, late brood-rearing, winter concentration areas, and migration or connectivity corridors. GHMAs are lands that are or have the potential to become occupied seasonal or year-round habitat outside of PHMA and SHMA, managed to sustain GRSG populations. SHMAs are a new habitat management area designation developed by Wyoming for areas that support robust GRSG populations important for effective management of the species in the state, but where existing disturbance, prior existing rights, and large percentages of private lands precluded designating these areas as GRSG core areas (as described in EO 2019-3). BLM Wyoming will manage SHMA the same as GHMA while providing support upon request for landowner-led GRSG conservation efforts in these areas.

The Priority, General, and Stewardship HMAs were identified by BLM Wyoming in coordination with the State of Wyoming. BLM Wyoming engaged in the State of Wyoming's efforts to update GRSG core areas and incorporated the results of the State's efforts into the Alternatives analyzed in the Draft and Final EISs. The initial draft core areas completed by the state were incorporated into Alternative 4 as PHMA, and the draft final core areas were incorporated into Alternatives 5 and 6 as PHMA and SHMA in the Draft EIS. The State of Wyoming made some minor edits to core areas following release of the Draft EIS, and these edits were incorporated into the Final EIS and Approved RMP Amendment as PHMA. SHMAs were incorporated into Alternatives 5 and 6 in the Draft EIS and into the Final EIS and Approved RMP Amendment. Reference Appendix 3 in the Final EIS for details on BLM Wyoming's approach to designating HMAs in the state. The identified HMA boundaries reflect updated habitat information that are based on monitoring data and updated scientific literature and the input and collaboration on the identification of boundaries with the State of Wyoming (refer to Map 3; Wyoming Habitat Management Areas).

In Wyoming, there are 15,709,635 acres of PHMA, 27,091,424 acres of GHMA, and 182,983 acres of SHMA. These habitat management areas form the cornerstone of focusing BLM's GRSG conservation efforts in the areas where they will be the most beneficial and effective. Wyoming's unique "all lands" approach to delineating HMAs necessitated variation in BLM Wyoming's management direction as compared to many of the rangewide decisions. The Wyoming-specific management direction was established to maintain consistency with WY EO 2019-3, address lessons learned from implementation of past versions of GRSG conservation plans, and to account for emerging issues. Further, in situations where BLM Wyoming followed

rangewide management direction, consistency with WY EO 2019-3, lessons learned, and emerging issues that were specific to Wyoming were addressed.

Allocations and Management Direction

In identifying the management allocations and direction that would apply in the PHMA, GHMA, and SHMA to meet the purpose and need, the BLM considered the effects of the alternatives identified in the Draft EIS (Chapter 4 in the Draft EIS) and the feedback received from the public, cooperating agencies, and Tribal governments on the Draft EIS. Based on these considerations, and to improve alignment with Federal policies, the BLM felt it was necessary to increase protections for GRSG, particularly in PHMA, from those identified in BLM's preferred alternative (Alternative 5), in the Draft EIS. In particular, the USFWS expressed concern that the conservation measures identified in Alternative 5 in the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS did not provide sufficient GRSG habitat protections. In 2010, the USFWS determined that listing the GRSG under the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA) was "warranted but precluded" by other priorities. However, in 2015, new information about the status of the species, potential threats, regulatory mechanisms, and conservation efforts led the USFWS to determine the species was not warranted for listing.

In response to USFWS feedback in the Draft EIS, the BLM increased protective measures, particularly in PHMA, in accordance with BLM's Special Status Species Manual, M-6840, which directs the BLM to "emphasize proactive conservation for BLM sensitive species to help ensure these species do not need to be listed as threatened or endangered under the ESA." Specifically, the BLM's Approved RMP Amendment increases protections in PHMA allocations and management direction from the Preferred Alternative identified in the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS by:

- changing the utility scale solar and wind allocations from avoidance to exclusion with restrictive exception criteria for potential ancillary solar development;
- expanding the definition of major ROWs to include transmission and distribution line ROWs and narrowing the exceptions for allowing development;
- before granting exceptions to the disturbance cap, exceptions must receive BLM State Director concurrence, and exceptions must be tracked, and conditions for voluntary mitigation must be met;
- updating habitat objectives to require the identification of multiple lines of evidence to determine overall habitat suitability when completing site-scale assessments;
- more explicitly defining habitat inputs for adaptive management direction and clarifying the coordination that will occur with state wildlife agencies; and
- clarifying the fluid minerals WEMs management direction to promote rangewide consistency and ensure proper tracking of WEMs.

The Proposed RMP Amendment in the Final EIS, which is the Approved RMP Amendment in this decision (with minor clarifications as noted in the **Changes and Clarifications** section), incorporates management direction approaches from all of the alternatives analyzed in the Draft RMP Amendment and EIS and provides the appropriate suite of management direction to conserve GRSG habitat. The allocations and management direction are designed to minimize surface disturbance while addressing habitat needs and development threats and public land uses in Wyoming thereby promoting conservation of habitat in a manner that allows for public land uses where possible and appropriate in accordance with BLM's multiple use and sustained yield mission. Chapter 4 of the Final EIS details the Approved RMP Amendment's potential impacts on GRSG.

Following is a description of the management allocations and direction that achieve these objectives.

Habitat Management

The Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming clarifies habitat management objectives and makes them consistent across the GRSG range and provides associated management direction that guides a consistent approach to promote the long-term durability of BLM's management decisions. The updated objectives identify what constitutes suitable habitat and addresses seasonal habitats, dispersal, and migration and the need to limit habitat disturbance and fragmentation. The updated objectives identify the scale at which the different habitat components must be maintained. The management direction provides methods for assessing habitat suitability through the use of Habitat Assessment Framework (HAF) assessments and the use of Habitat Indicator Tables (**Appendix 4**) to improve and restore habitat. However, specific vegetation conditions that characterize suitable habitat are moved from the objective itself and are instead summarized from the best available and locally applicable literature in the Habitat Indicator Tables. Because of this, the Appendix 4 Habitat Indicators Table was updated for this effort and will be periodically reviewed to incorporate the best available science in coordination with applicable federal, state, local, and tribal agencies. Additionally, the values provided in the Appendix 4 Habitat Indicators Table, as updated, will be used for HAF assessments. The Approved RMP Amendment focuses the objective on rangewide management for suitable habitat but allows for local adaptation for the specific vegetation conditions that define suitable habitat throughout a GRSG range with diverse vegetation, topography, and ecology to be informed and adjusted by local and continuing research. These objectives and management direction respond to updated science and feedback received from cooperating agencies, including the USFWS, the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, and the BLM's ongoing monitoring efforts.

Solar, Wind, Fluid Mineral, and Major ROWs

PHMA are exclusion areas for utility scale solar and wind energy development. Fluid mineral development is subject to major stipulations (no surface occupancy (NSO)) within 0.6 miles of leks and moderate stipulations (i.e., controlled surface use (CSU) and/or timing limitations (TL)) within PHMA outside of the 0.6-mile buffers. There are exceptions for solar energy generation that are ancillary to other approved uses (e.g., fluid mineral development, data centers), and exceptions for the fluid mineral development if specified criteria can be met. PHMA is an avoidance area for major ROWs with few site-specific exceptions for allowing development. SHMA and GHMA are open to wind, solar, fluid minerals, and major ROWs with NSO within 0.25 miles of leks and CSU and TL restrictions within 2 miles of leks. State minimization and mitigation measures apply in SHMA and GHMA.

These allocations respond to concerns raised regarding the threats associated with these uses (habitat loss, habitat avoidance, disturbance) while also ensuring that where possible and appropriate these uses can be allowed. Allocations for wind energy development aligns BLM Wyoming with WY EO 2019-3; allocations for solar energy development and ROWs address emerging issues (e.g., carbon capture) that needed direction in Wyoming; fluid mineral development stipulations are unchanged from 2015 and 2019 RMP Amendments at the project scale and updated to establish biological relevance at the landscape scale

In addition to the changes in fluid mineral allocations and WEMs, the over-arching fluid mineral objective no longer requires prioritization outside of PHMA and GHMA. Appendix C in the BLM's planning handbook (BLM-1601-1) identifies land use planning decisions for fluid minerals. A land use plan is to identify, "consistent with the goals and objectives for natural resources," areas that are 1) open to leasing subject to the terms and conditions of the standard lease form; 2) open to leasing subject to moderate constraints such as seasonal and controlled use restrictions; 3) open to leasing subject to major constraints such as no-

surface-occupancy (NSO); 4) closed to leasing. The handbook also notes, similar to language from the Energy Policy Act of 2005, that "when applying leasing restrictions, the least restrictive constraint to meet the resource protection objective should be used" (BLM-1601-1 Appendix C page 24). The combination of open to leasing subject to NSO stipulation and the prioritization objective created a situation that has been confusing to the public over whether PHMA is open to leasing or not, and with what stipulations. Additionally, the planning handbook describes how an implementation strategy—not the RMP itself—is the appropriate tool for the BLM to prioritize RMP decisions to help achieve desired outcomes, taking into account the availability of existing or anticipated staff and budget resources. Therefore removing the prioritization process from the RMP aligns with current BLM planning guidance. This approach is also consistent with recent amendments to the Mineral Leasing Act through the One Big Beautiful Bill Act (P.L. 119-21, Sec. 50101) ("OBBBA"), which limit the BLM's discretion for leasing parcels nominated in expressions of interest. Section 50101(d) of the OBBBA directs the BLM, acting on behalf of the Secretary, to make parcels known or believed to contain oil or gas deposits available for leasing "not later than 18 months" after receipt of an expression of interest, provided that the BLM "determines that the parcel of land is open to oil and gas leasing under the approved resource management plan applicable to the planning area in which the parcel of land is located that is in effect on the date on which the expression of interest was submitted." Retaining the prioritization process following enactment of section 50101(d) would potentially confuse the public and, for parcels nominated in expressions of interest, would likely be inconsistent or in tension with this new statutory direction. Finally, the analysis in the FEIS shows that prioritization is unnecessary for the BLM to provide sufficient protection for greater sage-grouse. The prioritization process provides no certain or durable protection to PHMA, and the BLM is retaining the stipulations associated with surface occupancy and disturbance cap.

Moreover, not including specific leasing prioritization language or a specific leasing strategy in the RMP does not remove the RMP's desired condition to manage public lands for suitable GRSG habitat at the HAF mid-, fine- and site-scales. Fluid mineral leasing would be considered in GRSG habitat management areas consistent with the Secretary's discretion to consider leasing or not leasing available public lands under the Mineral Leasing Act (as amended), subject to the limits on that discretion resulting from the amendments to the Mineral Leasing Act through the One Big Beautiful Bill Act. If lands are considered for lease, the action and any subsequent development would comply with applicable BLM regulations and policies, and conform to the RMP GRSG goals, objectives, stipulations, and management actions.

Locatable, Nonenergy Leasable, Saleable Minerals and Materials, and Coal

All HMAs are open to locatable mineral development in accordance with the 1872 Mining Law unless already withdrawn. PHMA is open to the expansion of existing nonenergy leasable mineral development operations but closed to new leases except in situations required for human health and safety (e.g., ventilation shafts for underground mining operations). SHMA and GHMA are open to nonenergy leasable mineral development with the application of state-specific minimization measures according to management direction in the 2015 and 2019 GRSG amendments being carried forward in this Approved RMP Amendment. The only difference in this planning effort is the adjustment of HMAs for where these allocations are applied.

PHMA is open for new free use permits and open for the expansion of existing saleable mineral development pits subject to state-specific minimization measures but is otherwise closed. SHMA and GHMA are open for saleable mineral development with the application of state-specific minimization measures according to management direction in the 2015 and 2019 GRSG amendments being carried forward in this Approved RMP Amendment.

For coal, in PHMA, SHMA, and GHMA, BLM will conduct the regulatory-required suitability process (unless one has already been conducted) to determine if the lease application is "unsuitable" for all or certain coal mining methods and will coordinate with the State in making the determination.

This mineral management direction clarifies BLM's approach to managing minerals and materials. The direction will reduce habitat loss or disturbance in PHMA habitat while allowing use and will continue with the application of appropriate minimization measures as established by the state in SHMA and GHMA thereby balancing necessary GRSG protections with public land use.

Livestock Grazing

The Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming provides management direction for livestock grazing to meet or make progress toward meeting the Land Health Standard (LHS) for special status species (SSS), based on existing BLM regulations and associated policies. This provides the tools to manage livestock grazing in a fashion consistent with healthy sagebrush systems, which in turn provide suitable habitat for GRSG. For example, the use of targeted grazing to manage fuel loads and fuel continuity is an example of using livestock to protect valuable habitat. The management direction in the Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming calls for considering GRSG when developing allotment management plans (or the functional equivalent) and other similar implementation planning. that is done to meet or make progress toward meeting BLM's Land Health Standards. This includes considering the vegetation needs of GRSG and ways of implementing range improvements in a manner that is least impactful to GRSG (such as fencing). In PHMA, when fully processing grazing authorizations, where livestock grazing is found to be a significant causal factor in not meeting the special status species standard, the NEPA analysis will include an alternative that identifies specific thresholds and responses to maintain or move PHMA toward providing suitable GRSG habitat. The Approved RMP Amendment also provides a suite of GRSG specific design features and best management practices for consideration and use when managing livestock grazing (refer to **Appendix 5**, Livestock Grazing Management Best Management Practices and Design Features).

The livestock grazing management direction was identified in response to cooperating agency and public feedback, updated scientific and monitoring data, and builds on and clarifies how the existing management direction for livestock grazing will continue to be implemented in a manner that conserves GRSG habitat.

This Approved RMP Amendment also clarifies that during the NEPA process for a full permit renewal, the Authorized Officer (AO) shall consider an alternative that identifies specific thresholds and responses to improving GRSG habitat in those allotments, in PHMA, where livestock grazing is found to be a significant causal factor. This does not mandate the AO to select that alterative, only that it should be considered.

Wild Horse and Burro Management

The Approved RMP Amendment provides management direction for wild horse and burro management with additional, specific direction regarding how to promote GRSG habitat conservation when applying the existing BLM policies and approaches for wild horse and burro management. Specifically, the management direction for wild horse and burros seeks to address areas within GRSG habitat where wild horses are a significant causal factor in not meeting LHS. Scientific literature has found that managing wild horses and burros at or below appropriate management levels minimizes negative impacts on GRSG population trends (Coates et al. 2021a, Beck et al. 2024). Where GRSG habitat overlaps with wild horse and burro ranges, the Approved RMP Amendment calls for managing wild horse and burro populations within established appropriate management levels and to achieve or make significant progress toward achieving LHS. The

management direction also directs the prioritization of wild horse gathers in PHMA, then SHMA and GHMA unless removals are necessary in other areas to address higher priority issues, including herd health impacts.

The wild horse and burro direction was identified in response to cooperating agency and public feedback, updated scientific and monitoring data, and builds on and clarifies how the existing management direction for wild horse and burros will be implemented in a manner that conserves GRSG habitat.

Mitigation, Disturbance Cap, Predation, Adaptive Management

As part of the comprehensive approach to promoting GRSG conservation, the Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming also updates the BLM's GRSG mitigation, disturbance cap, and adaptive management processes. These updates are responsive to public and cooperating agency feedback, changes in BLM policies, and experience the BLM has gained implementing these programs. For these same reasons, the Approved RMP Amendment also creates new management direction that addresses the predation risks associated with disturbance activities in GRSG habitat.

The mitigation direction in the Approved RMP Amendment adopts the mitigation language from Alternative 2, focusing on avoiding, minimizing, rectifying, and reducing GRSG impacts, but only considering compensatory mitigation when voluntarily offered by a proponent, required by a law other than FLPMA, or to meet a State recommendation or requirement. This change from the Draft EIS preferred alternative and Final EIS Proposed RMP Amendment is to align more closely with BLM's statutory authority. This results in working with the States to maintain existing habitat as the initial approach to GRSG habitat management, then working closely with State plans and authorities to address the potential for compensation. The Approved RMP Amendment retains the entire breadth of mitigation tools to be implemented through conformance with the RMP, applicable statutes, and consistent with state plans and policies. Prior to granting an exception to the disturbance cap, the criteria noted in the RMP related to compensatory mitigation voluntarily offered by the proponent would need to be documented, including the need to benefit the affected populations; these clarifications were made in response to cooperating agency feedback, BLM's experience implementing mitigation, and updated policies and science (e.g., Coates et al. 2021b). Adopting this mitigation strategy more closely aligns with the BLM's mitigation authorities, FLPMA requirements for consistency with state plans, and reflects the primary mitigation approach of avoiding and minimizing impacts through application of RMP allocations.

Recognizing the threat to GRSG that occurs from habitat disturbance and loss, the Approved RMP Amendment updates the disturbance cap direction and sets a 3% cap at the Habitat Assessment Framework fine scale but maintains the 5% cap at the project scale (i.e., the Density Disturbance Calculation Tool (DDCT) scale). When these disturbance caps are met, new infrastructure projects would be deferred to the extent allowable under applicable laws or valid existing rights. This means that the BLM would not apply the disturbance cap in a manner that would interfere with any valid existing rights. The Approved RMP Amendment directs how the disturbance cap calculation will be done and identifies disturbance cap exceptions and related criteria.

If during ongoing BLM habitat monitoring it is found that unanticipated effects to GRSG are occurring, despite the ongoing implementation of GRSG RMP Amendment direction from 2015, 2019, and this Approved RMP Amendment, this amendment provides a method for BLM to address those impacts before they become severe or irreversible through adaptive management. The adaptive management direction is based on the best available science and identifies thresholds and responses and provides that the BLM will continue to coordinate with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department and will serve as a member on the State of

Wyoming's Adaptive Management Working Group. The BLM is retaining the threshold limits for habitat loss or modification as in previous plans, although at a scale that is more meaningful to local populations.

The Approved RMP Amendment also addresses the secondary impact to GRSG from predation when habitat disturbance occurs (USFWS 2023). The management direction for predation responds to public and cooperating agency feedback. The Approved RMP Amendment requires the application of minimization measures to new and existing projects to minimize threats from predators that pose a threat to GRSG consistent with applicable law. In PHMA, in new, expanded, or renewal of existing energy or transmission related energy, mining and infrastructure projects, the project proponent is required to submit a predator subsidy management plan to minimize influx and support of new predators as a result of the project. The predator direction will help the BLM ensure that where projects have the potential to negatively impact GRSG, that appropriate design features and mitigation measures are put in place. The BLM does not have management authority over predator control; however, the BLM will continue to cooperate with other agencies should direct predator control be necessary.

The Approved RMP Amendment for mitigation, disturbance cap, predation, and adaptive management provides BLM Wyoming with a comprehensive suite of tools to ensure that GRSG conservation measures are effective, and BLM is able to be responsive to anticipated threats as well as unanticipated impacts. These tools fill gaps in BLM Wyoming's management direction and address management direction from preceding plans known to be ineffective.

Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

In Wyoming, the BLM considered six areas for potential designation as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) for GRSG habitat. These areas were first identified through both external nominations and internal rangewide and state-specific review processes that were subsequently thoroughly evaluated by the BLM to determine if they met the ACEC relevance and importance criteria identified in 43 CFR 1610.7-2 (3)(i) and (ii) (Reference Appendix 5 in the Final EIS for details on the Wyoming-specific relevance and importance determinations). With input from cooperating agencies and the public, BLM identified the following four areas as meeting the relevance and importance criteria and included them, in accordance with 43 CFR 1610.7-2 (g) under Alternative 3 and Alternative 6 in the Final EIS as potential ACECs:

ACEC considered	Acres
Golden Triangle/Little Sandy	272,557 acres
Carter-Crook	19,400 acres
Sagebrush Focal Areas in South Central and Southwestern	33,166 acres
Wyoming Greater South Pass and Upper Green River Basin	311,229 acres
Total	**636,352 acres**

In order to be designated as an ACEC, in addition to meeting the relevance and importance criteria, an area must also meet the special management attention criterion which is identified in 43 CFR 1610.7-2:

> ***(3) Special management attention.*** *The important historic, cultural, or scenic values; fish or wildlife resources; natural systems or processes; or natural hazards potentially impacting life and safety require special management attention. "Special management attention" means management prescriptions that:*
>
> > ***(i)*** *Protect and prevent irreparable damage to the relevant and important values, or that protect life and safety from natural hazards; and*

> ***(ii)*** *Would not be prescribed if the relevant and important values were not present. In this context, "irreparable damage" means harm to a value, resource, system, or process that substantially diminishes the relevance or importance of that value, resource, system, or process in such a way that recovery of the value, resource, system, or process to the extent necessary to restore its prior relevance or importance is impossible.*

In this Proposed RMP Amendment, in compliance with 43 CFR 1610.7-2, the BLM has evaluated the areas found to have relevance and importance and proposed them for ACEC designation in Alternatives 3 and 6. The BLM has also analyzed the effects of the management direction to these potential ACEC areas under all of the alternatives, including the Proposed RMP Amendment which is identified in this decision as the Approved RMP Amendment (refer to Appendix 5 in the FEIS for the analysis of effects). The effects analysis provides the information needed to determine if special management attention is needed to protect and prevent irreparable damage to the relevant and important values identified for the areas as required by 43 CFR 1610.7-2(3).

To determine whether special management attention through ACEC designation is appropriate for these areas, the BLM considered a range of management direction that included two alternatives (Alternatives 3 and 6) that would designate the areas as ACECs and establish associated management direction, and five alternatives (Alternatives 1, 2, 4, 5, and the Proposed RMP Amendment) that would not designate these areas as ACECs. In Alternatives 3 and 6, the BLM considered different management strategies for the ACECs under consideration, with Alternative 3 generally providing the highest level of restrictions on development and other land uses and Alternative 6 providing a high level of restrictions but allowing for slightly more opportunities for use (See FEIS Appendix 5, Table 5-2 for more detail). The BLM analyzed the potential effects to the relevant and important values of the GRSG habitat under all these alternatives.

In the Proposed RMP Amendment, the BLM identified fourteen areas that required additional protection from known highly probable resource threats, including the 272,557-acre Little Sandy/Golden Triangle area in Wyoming, as PHMA with limited exceptions. BLM identified these areas as PHMA with limited exceptions rather than designating areas as ACECs because limiting the number of exceptions from management measures already in use for PHMA did not justify giving these areas a separate designation but rather recognizes areas within PHMA that require additional protections from a high likelihood of development that negatively impacts GRSG habitats in those areas. In addition, since the changes in management were consistent across the range, the BLM determined that these areas were less suited to an ACEC designation, which are generally tailored to different values and locations. As detailed in Appendix 5 of the Final EIS, the BLM determined that this management direction under the Proposed RMP Amendment (including PHMA and state-specific HMAs) would protect and prevent irreparable damage to the relevant and important values of these potential ACEC areas.

The Approved RMP Amendment does not designate any ACECs, nor does it identify any areas as PHMA with limited exceptions. Following the release of the Proposed RMP Amendment, several states informed the BLM that they found the identification and additional protections in the PHMA with limited exceptions to be unnecessary, potentially inconsistent with state and local plans, policies, or programs (including because those states thought there could be confusion as to whether there would be two or three habitat management area designations), and a primary reason the states could not support the Proposed RMP Amendment. In consideration of the states' concerns related to ACECs and the PHMA areas with limited exceptions, and in order to allow the BLM and the states to move forward together, the BLM has removed PHMA with limited exception areas and is not designating any ACECs. The BLM maintains that the approach set out in the Proposed RMP Amendment, including PHMA with limited exceptions, is consistent with both

best available science and state and local plans, policies, and programs. Additionally, BLM stands by the science and process used to identify the PHMA with limited exception areas, which indicates that these areas are more likely to be negatively impacted by development, potentially reducing their value for GRSG. However, a coordinated management approach between BLM and the states is paramount to achieving GRSG conservation across its range. As detailed above in the BLM's purpose and need (refer to **Purpose and Need**), consistent and effective rangewide conservation is one of BLM's primary purposes in undertaking this RMP amendment process. Therefore, the Approved RMP Amendment neither designates the Little Sandy/Golden Triangle area as an ACEC nor identifies it as a PHMA area with limited exceptions.

These protections will protect and prevent irreparable damage to the GRSG habitat in these areas; therefore, BLM determined that special management attention through ACEC designation is not necessary.

Rationale Conclusion

Considered comprehensively, the habitat management area designations and the allocations and management direction in the Approved RMP Amendment best meet the purpose and need for this planning effort by using updated science and cooperating agency feedback, public feedback, and BLM implementation experience, to provide management direction that, when used in concert with existing GRSG management direction that is not being amended, will be applied where it will be the most effective for conserving GRSG habitat across the species range while being responsive to the habitat variability, threats, and public land uses in the Wyoming planning area.

CHANGES AND CLARIFICATIONS MADE BETWEEN PROPOSED RMP AMENDMENT/FINAL EIS AND APPROVED RMP AMENDMENT/ROD

The Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming is largely based on the Proposed RMP Amendment in the Greater Sage-grouse Rangewide Planning Proposed RMP Amendment and Final EIS that was published on November 15, 2024. The BLM made some changes and clarifications to the Proposed RMP Amendment as a result of coordination with the State of Wyoming during the Governor's Consistency Review process and to improve alignment of state and federal legal authorities, policies, and programs, described below in the "Changes Between Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS and Approved RMP Amendment/ROD." Consistent with 43 CFR 1610.2(f)(5) and 1610.5-1(b), significant changes to the proposed management direction published in the Proposed RMP Amendment were published for public comment on September 2, 2025, for a 30-day comment period. These changes are described below. The BLM carefully reviewed each of the changes to determine if they would result in significant effects outside the range of effects analyzed in the Proposed RMPA/Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). The BLM has determined that the analysis described in the Proposed RMPA/Final EIS is inclusive of the effects that would occur because of these changed management actions and supplemental analysis under the National Environmental Policy Act is not needed. A summary of the substantive comments received on the proposed changes and the BLM's response can be found in **Appendix 10**, *GRSG Rangewide Planning Comment Response Appendix.*

In addition to the significant changes, the BLM also made clarifications and edits to the text of the Approved RMP Amendment. These clarifications are described below in the "Clarifications and Edits Between Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS and Approved RMP Amendment/ROD" section. These clarifications and the edits made are neither substantive nor significant and therefore do not require that the BLM provide the public with further opportunity to comment.

Clarifications and Edits Between Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS and Approved RMP Amendment for Wyoming/Wyoming ROD

PHMA Allocations and Management Direction (Approved RMP Amendment Table 1):

- ***Edits to the GRSG Goal:*** Replaced "Conserve, enhance, restore" with language directly from FLPMA, removed the reference to BLM manual 6500, and integrated the connectivity concept into a comma-list rather than a stand-alone sentence. These edits retain the desired condition sought in the original goal (habitat that supports connected, persistent and healthy populations), and improve alignment with FLPMA's statutory language. The comma list of "conserve, enhance, restore" are all versions of management; splitting them out does not clarify the agency's desired condition. These edits focus on the agency's desired outcome, regardless of the most applicable managerial tool. Finally, as a special status species, GRSG are associated with the BLM's 6840 manual, and not the 6500 wildlife and fisheries manual. Since these edits retain the original desired condition, the changes are not significant.
- ***Fluid Minerals Objective:*** Changed "…avoid, minimize, and compensate for adverse impacts to GRSG habitat to the extent practical under the law…" to read "…avoid when practicable, then minimize and compensate for adverse impacts to GRSG habitat to the extent required under the law…" The change clarifies that complete avoidance (i.e., closure to leasing) was not the intent of this objective. The change clarifies that avoidance is an important tool, but it is just one of the tools to mitigate impacts to GRSG from fluid mineral development. The change of "practical" to "required" more accurately connects the mitigation tools in this objective to actual statutory requirements instead of just practicality. In addition, the italicized text that was included in the Final EIS was removed, as it was merely for the reader comprehension when comparing alternatives, which is no longer an issue in the Approved RMP Amendment.

  Fluid Minerals Management Direction: Added "in Areas Already Leased" to the heading "Management Action to Address Development" to improve clarity of intent. Renamed the Allocation section to read "Allocations for Unleased Lands" and moved it to directly precede the language for exceptions, modifications and waivers to more clearly associated the WEMs with the allocations/stipulations. In addition, moved the paragraphs associated with coordination with state agencies, application of WEMs in areas where adaptive management thresholds are activated, and with applicable public review direction to be presented just once, under the "Allocations for Unleased Lands" header rather than repeating them under each applicable WEM. These and other editorial changes were made to decrease repetition and improve readability.

  Revised the first sentence of the second paragraph of the "…Areas Already Leased" section by focusing on the outcomes being sought. Deleted the second sentence of the second paragraph as it merely provided some approaches that could be taken to achieve the outcomes from the first sentence ("to promote effective management and connectivity of seasonal habitats and PHMA to accomplish measurable GRSG conservation objectives"). The last sentence of the second paragraph was edited to improve clarity of intent, as the original wording was unclear. These edits relate to improving clarity or removing examples, and the underlying condition being sought has not changed, therefore these edits are not significant.

- **Fluid Minerals Allocations for Unleased Lands/Waivers, Exceptions, Modifications:** The BLM added "controlled surface use (CSU), and Timing Limitations (TL)" to the end of the fluid mineral allocation to better specify the conditions that fluid mineral development is subject to within PHMA. These conditions are not new and were previously described elsewhere in the Proposed

RMP Amendment. The full allocation now reads "Open to leasing subject to no surface occupancy (NSO) (unless otherwise closed), controlled surface use (CSU), and Timing Limitations (TL). Refer to the following NSO exceptions."
Removed GRSG NSO exception 2, as it applies to a GRSG NSO stipulation in PHMA beyond 0.6 miles of a lek, and the GRSG NSO allocation for fluid minerals in Wyoming is limited to just 0.6 miles from leks. Based on the allocation, there are no areas where Exception 2 applies, so it is unnecessary. Also moved the Exception 1 paragraph related to landownership patterns to be a stand-alone exception (now Exception 2), as it is unrelated to the other purposes noted in the rest of Exception 1.

The text explicitly identifying a 30-day public review period prior to granting the NSO or disturbance cap waiver, exception and modification was revised. New text was added stating that "prior to granting a waiver, exception, or modification to any GRSG NSO stipulation or Disturbance Cap, the Authorized Officer shall comply with regulatory public review requirements, if applicable (see 43 CFR 3101)." This change is not significant because the BLM's fluid mineral regulations in the cited section already requires Authorized Officers to provide at least a 30-day public review opportunity prior to granting exceptions (i.e., one-time waivers) and modifications for changes that involve "an issue of major concern to the public" or "…a change to a lease term or stipulation that is substantial…" Because this direction is already in regulation, there is no need to repeat the language in the RMP.

The text at the end of the first sentences in NSO Exception 1 that states "after documenting the review of available information associated with the site proposed for the exception" and "both internally compiled and as provided by state, county, and other local agencies, tribal governments, project proponents, other federal agencies or interested stakeholders" was deleted. This change was made to remove implementation process language that is not appropriate for inclusion in RMPs. The parties from which the BLM accepts information is guided by statute, regulation, and policy. Because the removed language is process (how something will be done, not what will be done), its removal is not significant as the standard that must be met to grant either exception remains.

- ***Non-energy Leasable Minerals:*** "Apply required design features, best management practices, and minimization measures identified in the existing GRSG amendments (refer to **Appendix 2**)" was added as Management Direction. This direction was previously included in GHMA only and was inadvertently omitted from inclusion in PHMA in the Proposed RMP Amendment. BLM added this direction to clarify that these measures apply for non-energy leasable minerals projects in both PHMA and GHMA.
- ***Major ROWs:*** BLM revised the language of the first major ROW avoidance criteria to better articulate the provision described in MD LR 1 (see **Appendix 2**), which facilitates actions in RMP designated corridors for which they were established. RMP designated corridors may or may not contain infrastructure but impacts were previously analyzed when the RMP designated corridors were established. The sentence now reads "RMP designated corridors within PHMA are open to consideration of a new major ROW in the category of ROW for which the corridor was designated if the proposed authorization within the existing ROW corridor results in impacts similar to those already described in the environmental analysis to establish the corridor, including indirect disturbance to or disruption of adjacent seasonal habitats."

  Additionally, the second avoidance criteria for major ROWs in the Proposed RMP Amendment read "the ROW can be routed through, or located within, non-habitat/unsuitable habitat…and lacks the

ecological potential to become suitable habitat…" The language related to unsuitable habitat was removed to align with the exception language in the fluid mineral WEMs section. This change is not significant, as unsuitable habitat that ecologically cannot become suitable would not be habitat, which is already included in the category of non-habitat. In addition, the text of the second bullet also reads "ROWs shall not disrupt connectivity between habitat areas…" This was edited to read "ROWs shall minimize disruption of connectivity…" Completely eliminating any impact to connectivity movements can only be accomplished through not allowing any development. If that was the agency's intent, the area would have been allocated as ROW exclusion. Since the intent of this action is to allow for consideration of development under narrow conditions, the text was changed to improve consistency with intent, while retaining the need to protect connectivity between populations.

Finally, the second sentence of the exception language in sub-bullet "a" was moved to be a stand-alone sub-bullet "b" and was reworded to improve clarity of intent.

Livestock Grazing: The BLM removed the second and third sentences in the second paragraph in Allocation RM-1. These sentences present a comma list of potential adjustments the BLM considers "in conformance with [BLM's grazing] regulations." The last sentence of Allocation RM-1 was then merged at the end of the retained sentence. The last sentence refers the reader to Appendix 5, which includes grazing best management practices, many of which include items from the deleted coma list. The deletion of these sentences is not significant due to the lack of RMP-decision, repetition of regulation and policy, and duplication in Appendix 5.

BLM also revised the language in the third sentence of management direction RM-2 to better articulate the management direction's consistency with BLM regulations and policy. The sentence now reads "Thresholds specific to GRSG habitat will be developed to make significant progress toward fulfillment of the Land Health Standards (43 CFR Part 4180.2 or subsequent changes to regulations or policy) and maintain or move PHMA toward providing suitable GRSG habitat (e.g., Table 4-1, **Appendix 4**) where livestock grazing has been identified as a significant causal factor, and be designed to address the HAF assessment rating that warranted the Land Health Evaluation finding, and consider ecological site potential, and relevant locally specific conditions, and Land Health Standards."

In addition, the sentence in RM-4 to "focus authorization…on projects that have a nominal or incidental effects" was removed due to the use of the unclear terms of focus, nominal and incidental. Based on experience implementing the 2015 ARMPAs, the use of these undefined and ambiguous terms results in confusion and inconsistency during implementation. The removal of this sentence is not significant, as the overall intent of RM-4 is retained in the absence of this sentence, specifically that "new…improvements should be placed along existing disturbance corridors in the least suitable habitat…"

Finally, the management direction RM-6 was removed from the Approved RMP Amendment. It was removed to simplify the RMP amendment by removing range management actions that merely re-state the BLM's existing authorities. This change is not significant because nothing in RM-6 compels or requires the BLM to select a specific course of action if relinquishment occurs, only to consider a course of action, which is a re-statement of BLM's authorities under existing grazing regulations. The BLM will continue to follow applicable law, regulations, and policy when implementing grazing decisions on public lands.

The introduction of Appendix 5 was edited to clarify that the livestock grazing strategies, practices, or design features are presented as tools but are not required to be considered and dismissed for every action, as the required design features were from the 2015 ARMPA. In addition, the BMPs were edited to eliminate duplication of concepts and clarify implementation in coordination of livestock grazing practices with non-BLM agencies and landowners. Where BMPs duplicate management elsewhere in the document, they were removed. This is most evident in the deletion of section 5.1.5 that summarized principles from the BLM's 2004 National Sage-Grouse Habitat Conservation Strategy. That section's concepts are included in management actions in the Approved RMP Amendment and bullets in Appendix 5.

- ***Predation:*** The BLM clarified that the intent of the management plan's predation requirement was specifically for artificial/new subsidies for predators. The first sentence of Management Action 2 was adjusted from, "authorizations that require expanded, or new, or renewal of energy or transmission related infrastructure…" to "authorizations that require expanded, new, renewal, or non-routine maintenance of energy, mining, or transmission related infrastructure projects…" to better explain which projects require proponents to submit a predator subsidy management plan. A definition of "non-routine maintenance" was also added to the Glossary, **Appendix 6**.
- ***Mitigation*:** The mitigation language from the Final EIS Proposed RMP Amendment was changed to reflect the mitigation language from the Final EIS Alternative 2, with one adjustment of removing the reference to the expired BLM IM 2019-018. Recission of the 2024 version (6-142) of BLM Manual 6840 and reversion to the 2008 version (Rel – 6-125) changes the agency policy for compensatory mitigation related to special status species. Specifically, the 2024 version notes the land use plan should "…seek to achieve no net loss or net benefit outcomes for special status species…" No such language is in the 2008 version. The 2024 version also directs the BLM to "develop and implement compensatory mitigation…" In the 2008 version, the manual states management should be developed to "minimize or eliminate threats affecting the status of the species or to improve the condition of the species habitat." There is only one sentence of the last option (of eight) to achieve this for BLM special status species that states "off-site mitigation may be used to reduce potential effects on Bureau listed species." The change to the Approved RMP Amendment mitigation language is made to better align with the current special status species policies within the range of alternatives available. Because the intent of this plan amendment has consistently been to seek to avoid and minimize impacts first, with compensatory mitigation being a tertiary tool, the BLM's clarification about how it will approach compensatory mitigation is not a significant change. Moreover, the BLM will continue to rely on the primary protective measures of allocations and the disturbance cap, requiring exceptions being met, including voluntary compensatory mitigation, before granting exceptions. For these reasons, changing the compensatory mitigation language is not a significant change.
- ***Disturbance Cap:*** In the disturbance cap numerator section, the bullet for "military range facilities and infrastructure" was removed. Since implementing the 2015 disturbance cap, no areas in this category have been documented in PHMA. In addition, there are no acres of Department of War lands overlapping PHMA in Wyoming, Nevada, North Dakota, Montana, or Wyoming. As such, there is no potential for these types of disturbances. In Idaho and South Dakota, a small fraction of the total HMA acres where the disturbance cap applies are Department of War lands (12 acres in Idaho PHMA, 204 acres of South Dakota PHMA, and 11,143 acres of Idaho IHMA). In addition, if any infrastructure was constructed on these lands, it would be a fraction of the total acres. Given

current and likely future potential for these types of disturbances, removing this bullet is not significant.

Clarified the Disturbance Cap Denominator section in the fourth paragraph related to non-habitat and unsuitable habitat by replacing the word "otherwise" at the end of the first sentence with "areas of non-habitat or unsuitable habitat" and adding examples of processes and data to identify non-habitat and unsuitable habitat in the second sentence. These edits simply clarify otherwise less clear language. Also, in the list of conditions associated with granting an exception to the disturbance cap, sub-bullets "d" and "f" were combined, as they addressed similar conditions, as well as the condition already stated in "a".

- ***Utility Scale Solar and Wind*:** The allocation for both utility scale wind and solar development remains unchanged as exclusion; the exception criteria for the exclusion allocation were removed for both wind and solar. Given the nature of the updated GRSG habitat management areas and the amount of land needed for utility scale wind and solar projects, including exceptions to the exclusion allocation is misleading. While there are areas of non-habitat and unsuitable habitat, they are generally small, non-contiguous patches. Combined with the known impacts of large solar and wind projects, and especially the indirect impacts of wind development on adjacent lands, there is very little likelihood that any areas could meet the exceptions. Therefore, removing these exceptions is not a significant change considering potential impacts to both GRSG and wind and solar development.

  In the instance of smaller solar projects developed as ancillary support for other approved uses (e.g., mineral development, data centers), narrow exceptions consistent with the fluid mineral NSO exceptions were retained. Such developments can be used to electrify remote mineral developments and can be used in place of constructing powerlines. Any such developments, if proposed, would have similar impacts to those associated with fluid minerals development, so this change is not significant.

- ***References to a "qualified biologist":*** Fluid mineral NSO exceptions 1 and 2, and major ROWs avoidance criteria refer to conditions being determined by a "qualified biologist" with no definition or education and experience standards for such. Rather than using this undefined term, it was changed to read "wildlife biologist" with the understanding that an individual with education and qualifications in wildlife biology will understand the scientific principles needed to perform the needed tasks.

- ***References to specific positions for certain tasks*:** Several management actions identified specific BLM positions to complete certain tasks. While all these required actions were retained, task assignments to a specific position were removed. The RMP is not the correct document to establish a delegated authority for specific tasks to specific positions. Beyond authorities specifically described in regulations – generally the "Authorized Officer" or "State Director" – the BLM will comply with agency defined delegations of authority when implementing the RMP. Since the various actions were all retained, there is no effect of removing the BLM position that implements an action.

GHMA Allocations and Management Direction (Approved RMP Amendment Table 2):

- **Fluid Minerals:** The language from the Proposed RMP Amendment "**Allocation and Management Actions:** Same management direction as identified in 2015 and 2019 for all States except as noted in "State-Specific Differences" column was updated to read "**Objectives, Allocation, and Management Direction**: Same as identified in 2015 RMP Amendment." This

adjustment was made to reflect BLM's intent that fluid mineral objectives, allocations, and management direction are not amended in GHMA in this Approved RMP Amendment.

- **Livestock Grazing:** BLM corrected a typo in the number of management direction referenced in livestock grazing management direction, revising "Same as PHMA except RM-3 does not apply" to "Same as PHMA except RM-2 does not apply."

Other:
The BLM made several minor revisions to improve the clarity of the Wyoming-specific Approved RMP Amendment as compared to the Proposed RMP Amendment. These clarifications include:

- Additional detail when referencing previous GRSG-related RMP Amendments.
- Appendices were renumbered and small editorial changes were made to introductory text.
- Wyoming-specific modifications to rangewide text, previously described separately in the Proposed RMP Amendment, were integrated directly into the language in the Approved RMP Amendment. This includes direct edits to the text of objectives, allocations, and management direction, additions of Wyoming-specific HMA direction, deletion of NSO exception language not relevant in Wyoming (no NSO stipulations applied beyond 0.6 miles of leks in PHMA), and clarification of how BLM will adhere to Wyoming mitigation policy. Additionally: the glossary was updated to reflect the WGFD lek definition; corresponding edits were made within the Approved RMP Amendment where necessary.
  - **Glossary:** state-specific definitions were added into the glossary, adding additional detail to BLM's adoption of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA)'s lek definitions.

Significant Changes Between Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS and Approved RMP Amendment/ROD

Two changes were made to the Proposed RMP Amendment during the Wyoming Governor's Consistency Review process. Section 202 of FLPMA and its implementing regulations require the BLM to develop, amend, and revise land use plans to be consistent with State and local plans to the maximum extent consistent with federal law and the purposes of FLPMA. This planning effort involved extensive coordination and consultation with State representatives, including modifying the RMPA to improve consistency with the Wyoming State plan.

These change were within the range of alternatives considered in the Final EIS, and the BLM determined were substantially significant to warrant a public notice and comment period consistent with the BLM's planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-1(b). As a result, the BLM published a notice in the Federal Register on September 3, 2025, notifying the public of these changes and providing a 30-day comment period. The results of the comment period are described in the Public Involvement section below.

PHMA with Limited Exceptions:
The BLM is not including the identification of PHMA with limited exceptions and the associated PHMA with limited exceptions management direction that was identified in the Proposed RMP Amendment in the Approved RMP Amendment. As described in the ACEC section above, Wyoming and several other states found the identification of PHMA with limited exceptions and the additional protections provided for these areas to be unnecessary, potentially inconsistent with state and local plans, policies, or programs (including concern that this would mean three federal management area designations instead of two), and a primary reason the states could not support the Proposed RMP Amendment. In consideration of the states' concerns

and in order to allow the BLM and the states to move forward together, the BLM has removed PHMA with limited exceptions and all associated management direction. The area would be identified as PHMA and would be subject to the management allocations and direction for PHMA (refer to Table 1 in the Approved RMP Amendment).

A coordinated management approach between the BLM and the states is paramount to achieving GRSG conservation across its range. As a result, in the spirit of promoting consistent and coordinated GRSG conservation across its range, in consideration of the increased protection for PHMA included in the Approved RMP as compared to the Draft Preferred Alternative, and due to the requirement to conduct additional NEPA on future projects that would fully analyze impacts to GRSG and its habitat, and consistent with 43 CFR 1610.3-2, the BLM has removed the PHMA with limited exceptions and associated PHMA with limited exceptions management direction from the Approved RMP Amendment.

Adaptive Management:

The adaptive management language was changed from Wyoming's Proposed RMPA to better align the BLM's adaptive management process with the State's adaptive management policy and program to manage GRSG populations. Wyoming expressed a need to clarify how the state's adaptive management approach would be incorporated into the BLM's adaptive management process. Wyoming and other states also expressed a concern with using the targeted annual warning system (TAWS) model and a desire to use models maintained and controlled by state wildlife agencies for sage-grouse population calculations. The BLM recognizes state governments' authority to manage GRSG populations. Given this, the BLM revised the Approved RMP Amendment's adaptive management direction to clarify that where a state has an adaptive management process as part of the State's GRSG management plan, program, policy, regulation, or authority, the BLM will participate in and implement the most recent state adaptive management process. The revised Adaptive Management language for Wyoming is included in Table 1 of the Approved RMP Amendment and Appendix 10.

MITIGATION

The BLM has adopted all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm in the Approved RMP Amendment. In determining the scope of the planning effort, BLM identified habitat mitigation as an element of RMPs considered for amendment to meet the purpose and need of responding to updated scientific information and changing land uses and providing for consistent and effective rangewide conservation based on biological information that is responsive to locally relevant habitat variability. The BLM focused on habitat mitigation as sagebrush habitat fragmentation, loss and disturbance have been identified as the primary influences on GRSG population trends (Knick and Hanser, 2011). Therefore, as mitigation was within the scope of the RMP Amendment, the BLM considered a range of alternatives for mitigation strategies to best address the purpose and need and analyzed potential impacts of each alternative in the EIS (See FEIS Appendix 21 for more detail).

As described above, the BLM determined the management direction identified in the Proposed RMP Amendment, with the changes as described, in combination with the mitigation approach from Alternative 2, best meets the purpose and need and has decided to select it in this Approved RMP Amendment. The Approved RMP Amendment thus establishes the habitat objectives and management actions below and provides additional detail on the application of mitigation during project implementation (see Table 1 in the Approved RMP Amendment).

Consistent with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, as amended, the BLM's Resource Management Planning Regulations at 43 CFR 1610, and current mitigation related policies, all resource management authorizations and actions, and subsequent more detailed or specific planning must conform to the approved RMP. Therefore, by establishing this enforceable RMP direction, the BLM has adopted all practicable means to avoid or minimize environmental harm.

CONSULTATION AND COORDINATION

Tribal Government Consultation

There are two potentially affected federally recognized Tribes who have an interest in the Wyoming portion of the planning area: the Eastern Shoshone Tribe of the Wind River Reservation and the Northern Arapaho Nation. BLM sought to initiate Tribal consultation efforts in the preparation of this RMP Amendment and coordinated with both Tribes on the planning effort in accordance with BLM Manual 8130 (BLM 2004) and Handbook 1780 (BLM 2016a). The BLM contacted the Tribes by mail, email, and/or phone at multiple stages in the planning process (direct outreach, official Scoping period, Draft RMP Amendment/EIS comment period, and during administrative review periods). Subsequent outreach continued through emails, phone calls, and meetings with Tribal personnel, as they have expressed interest. The BLM received a letter from the Northern Arapaho Nation establishing their interest in commenting on the proposed project. Neither of the Tribes entered into formal government-to-government consultation on the planning effort.

On September 4, 2024, the BLM held an online information session for Tribal governments to provide an update on the development of the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS. Individuals from the Ely Shoshone Tribe, Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe, Confederated Tribes of the Goshute Reservation, Colville Tribes, Fort McDermitt Paiute-Shoshone Tribe, Moapa Band of Paiutes, Modoc Nation, and the Gros Ventre & Assinboine Tribes of the Fort Belknap Indian Community attended the informational meeting.

State Historic Preservation Office Coordination

Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and regulations at 36 CFR Part 800 govern the BLM's cultural resource management programs. These regulations provide specific procedures for consultation between the BLM and SHPO. The BLM Wyoming State Office coordinated with the Wyoming SHPO in accordance with the Wyoming State protocols on this plan amendment effort and in accordance with the National Programmatic Agreement (PA) between the BLM, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, and National Conference of State Historic Preservation Officers. The BLM has met its obligations under Section 106 of the NHPA, 54 U.S.C. § 306108, as outlined in the National PA and the State Protocol. The Approved RMP Amendment will not approve any site-specific actions on BLM-administered lands within the planning area. The BLM will satisfy the requirements of NHPA Section 106 for future implementation-level decisions, such as project proposals, including adequate consultation with SHPOs, THPOs, Native American Tribes, and other interested parties, consistent with the alternative procedures set forth in the National PA and relevant State Protocol or where applicable the Section 106 regulations.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Consultation

Under Section 7(a)(2) of the ESA, federal agencies must consult with USFWS when an action the agency carries out, funds, or authorizes may affect any federally listed or endangered species or its critical habitat. The Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS describes potential impacts on threatened and endangered species because of management actions proposed in the alternatives. The USFWS is a cooperating agency in this planning process. The BLM has met with the USFWS and provided them with drafts of proposed management direction for discussion and input.

The BLM initiated Section 7 consultation with the USFWS on August 14, 2023, before the release of the Draft RMP Amendment/Draft EIS and requested concurrence on which species would require consideration during consultation. Over the ensuing months, regular meetings were held to identify the species that would be analyzed in the biological assessment, to address which actions could affect those species, and to determine whether the implementation of the Proposed RMP Amendment "may affect" the species for which this consultation occurred.

The BLM submitted the biological assessment to the USFWS on November 19, 2024, with an amendment submitted on December 6, 2024, for review on whether the plans would affect a Federally listed, proposed, or candidate species. The USFWS evaluated the biological assessment and concurred with either a "no effect" or "may affect, but not likely to adversely affect" determination via memorandum for all states within the planning area on December 9, 2024. Based on revisions to BLM's Proposed RMP Amendment, summarized in the **Changes and Clarifications** section above, the USFWS provided a revised concurrence memorandum on January 8, 2025. On September 10, 2025, BLM provided an updated memo and Biological Assessment for the GRSG Rangewide Planning effort and the Proposed Changes document. On October 22, 2025, USFWS provided a concurrence letter concluding informal consultation on BLM's Greater Sage-grouse Rangewide Planning Changes to Proposed RMPA for Idaho, Montana/Dakotas, Nevada/California, Utah, and Wyoming document. On December 8, 2025, the USFWS reviewed the changes made in response to public comments and DOI review and stated that they did not need to re-issue a concurrence memorandum. This memorandum is included as **Appendix 8** in this Approved RMP Amendment.

Cooperating Agencies

In December 2021 and January 2022, the BLM invited Tribal governments and state and local agencies with jurisdiction by either law or special expertise, or both, to participate as cooperating agencies in the planning process. A cooperating agency can be a Tribe, federal, state, or local government agency with jurisdiction by law or special expertise that assists a lead federal agency in developing an environmental assessment or environmental impact statement (43 CFR 1610.3-1(b)). The BLM invited many cooperators to engage in this effort who either did not reply or chose not to participate.

Coordination with the cooperating agencies has included project presentations and working meetings discussing the purpose and need, new science, alternative strategies, range of alternatives, review of alternative text, meetings to review subsequent changes and further refine the alternatives, and a review of the administrative Draft RMP Amendment/EIS. Since the release of the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS, the BLM has met with cooperating agencies to discuss their feedback on the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS and get their input on the development of the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS and state-specific management direction. Cooperating agencies were provided an administrative draft of the Proposed RMP Amendment management direction for review. As a result of these reviews and the many state-level meetings with cooperating agencies, the BLM made many changes to the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS that improved the clarity of the document and addressed cooperating agency concerns.

Details on the full process followed for cooperating agency invitation, engagement and participation can be found in the Final EIS in Chapter 5, Section 5.4 Cooperating Agencies.

Federal cooperating agencies included the United States Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. For BLM Wyoming, cooperating agencies within the state include: Big Horn County Commissioners, Campbell County Commissioners, Campbell County Conservation District, Carbon County Commissioners, Converse County Commissioners, Converse County

Conservation District, Crook County Commissioners, Fremont County Commissioners, Hot Springs County Commissioners, Johnson County Commissioners, Laramie Rivers Conservation District, Lincoln County Commissioners, Lincoln Conservation District, Lingle-Fort Laramie Conservation District, Lower Wind River Conservation District, Medicine Bow Conservation District, Meeteetse Conservation District, Natrona County Commissioners, Niobrara County Commissioners, Park County Commissioners, Popo Agie Conservation District, Saratoga-Encampment-Rawlins Conservation District, Sheridan County Commissioners, South Big Horn Conservation District, Shoshone Conservation District, State of Wyoming, Wyoming Department of Agriculture, Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, Wyoming State Historic Preservation Office, Wyoming State Parks and Cultural Resources, Wyoming State Forestry, Wyoming Game and Fish Department, Wyoming Department of Environmental Quality, Wyoming Office of State Lands and Investment, Sublette County Conservation District, Sublette County, Sweetwater County Conservation District, Sweetwater County, Teton County Commissioners, Uinta County Conservation District, Uinta County, Washakie County Commissioners, Washakie County Conservation District, Weston County Commissioners.

BLM Wyoming worked closely with the state and other Wyoming cooperating agencies throughout this planning process discussing management direction and garnering feedback to strengthen the state-level relevance of the RMP Amendment. The BLM Wyoming State Office hosted 17 virtual meetings with Wyoming cooperators, 11 of which were recorded and made available to cooperators. BLM Wyoming received feedback on the plan during biweekly Wyoming Sage-grouse Leadership Team meetings that were held throughout the planning process. BLM Wyoming staff met individually on more than 30 occasions during the planning process with members of multiple Wyoming State agencies, including the Wyoming Game and Fish Department, the Wyoming Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, the Wyoming Department of Agriculture, and the Wyoming Governor's Office. BLM Wyoming held 4 public meetings throughout the state in the spring of 2024. The BLM and the State of Wyoming each participated in over 20 meetings as part of the Western Governors' Association Sage-grouse Task Force.

Governor's Consistency Review

The BLM's planning regulations require that BLM RMPs and RMP Amendments be "consistent with officially approved or adopted resource-related plans, and the policies and procedures contained therein, of other Federal agencies, State and local governments, and Indian Tribes, so long as the guidance and resource management plans also are consistent with the purposes, policies, and programs of Federal laws and regulations applicable to public lands" (43 CFR 1610.3-2(a)).

The BLM made the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS available to the Governor of Wyoming for a 60-day consistency review as required by 43 CFR 1610.3-2(e). The Wyoming Governor's consistency review of the Proposed RMP Amendment and Final EIS ran for 60 days from November 8, 2024 through January 7, 2025. The Governor of Wyoming submitted a letter to the BLM on January 7, 2025 that raised concerns and potential inconsistencies between the Proposed RMP Amendment and State policies. The BLM met with the Governor's Office several times to discuss their concerns. As a result of these meetings, the BLM provided a consistency response letter clarifying language to the RMP Amendment on July 22, 2025 as described in the **Clarifications** section of this RO. The BLM and the Governor's Office also committed to an ongoing dialogue on issues of interest to the State. The Governor's Office expressed support for the BLM to move forward with issuance of the RMP Amendment and ROD and did not submit an appeal of the State Director's consistency response to the BLM Director.

RMP Amendment Monitoring

RMP monitoring is the process of tracking the implementation of resource management plan decisions (implementation monitoring) and collecting data/information necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of land use plan decisions (effectiveness monitoring) in meeting the purpose and need of the plan or plan amendment. Monitoring strategies for GRSG habitat and populations must be collaborative, as habitat occurs across jurisdictional boundaries. As part of the 2015 GRSG amendment effort, the BLM developed a Monitoring Framework to provide consistent approaches to monitor planning actions across the range (BLM 2015a). In 2021 the BLM published the *Greater Sage-Grouse Plan Implementation Rangewide Monitoring Report for 2015-2020* with the results of implementing the 2015 monitoring framework. As part of this amendment process, the BLM is revisiting the approaches in the monitoring framework, updating it based on lessons learned over the past eight years. The updated monitoring framework is in **Appendix 3**. The BLM's monitoring efforts will continue in partnership with federal and state fish and wildlife agencies.

Monitoring data is used to draw conclusions on whether management actions are being implemented, and if they are helping to meet the stated objectives. Conclusions are then used to recommend whether to continue current management or to identify what changes may need to be made to meet objectives. The BLM would use land use plan evaluations to determine if the decisions in the RMP Amendment, supported by the accompanying NEPA analysis, may need to be amended in light of new information and monitoring data. Its evaluations would follow the protocols established by the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1), Manual 1735 Inventory and Monitoring of Ecological Resources, or other appropriate guidance in effect at the time the evaluation is initiated.

Public Involvement

In addition to the extensive collaboration with federal, state, local, and Tribal governments and cooperating agencies detailed above, the BLM provided numerous opportunities for public involvement throughout the development of the RMP Amendment and EIS. The Approved RMP Amendment and Final EIS were substantially shaped based on input provided by the public.

Project Website

The BLM maintains a national GRSG conservation website (https://www.blm.gov/programs/fish-and-wildlife/sage-grouse) as part of its efforts to maintain and restore GRSG habitat on public lands. The site is intended to help the public learn how the BLM is working on maintaining and restoring GRSG habitat. It includes background information related to government and BLM roles in GRSG conservation. In addition to the national GRSG conservation website, the BLM established a National NEPA Register website with information related to this planning effort at https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2016719/510. Throughout the planning process, the BLM maintained both websites to include the most current information, and share background documents, information on public meetings, contact information, and all relevant planning and NEPA-related documents.

Scoping Process

The formal public scoping process for the Proposed RMP Amendment/Draft EIS began on November 22, 2021, with the publication of the Notice of Intent (NOI) to amend RMPs and prepare an EIS in the *Federal Register* (Vol. 86 No. 222). The NOI notified the public of the BLM's intent to develop an RMP Amendment for the management of GRSG and initiated the public scoping period, which closed on February 8, 2022. In January 2022, BLM hosted two virtual public meetings, during which BLM provided opportunities to become involved, learn about the project and the planning process, and participate in a question-and-answer session where participants were able to ask BLM specialists questions and receive live responses. During the

comment period, the BLM received 258 total submissions containing 1,865 unique comments. The issues identified during public scoping and outreach helped inform the development of the alternatives and the resource issues analyzed in the Proposed RMP Amendment/Draft EIS.

Draft RMP Amendment/EIS Comment Period

The BLM released the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS for a 90-day comment period from March 15th, 2024, through June 13th, 2024. Thirteen public meetings were held, including two virtual meetings and eleven in-person meetings throughout the planning area. Over 39,000 submissions were received, including approximately 6,000 individual comments. The BLM has also initiated and/or participated in over 80 meetings with Tribes; federal, state, and county cooperating agencies; and interest groups between the issuance of the Draft RMP Amendment/EIS and Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS. The BLM considered all public comments and responded to all substantive comments in the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS (refer to Appendix 22, Draft RMP Amendment/EIS Public Outreach and Responses to Substantive Public Comments in the Final EIS). The high level of public comments and high level of stakeholder coordination significantly shaped the RMP Amendment.

Final EIS Availability Period and Proposed RMP Amendment Protest Period

The BLM released the Proposed RMP Amendment and Final EIS on November 8, 2024, and published an associated Federal Register Notice (89 FR 90311) on November 15, 2024. The Final EIS was also identified in the Environmental Protection Agency's November 15, 2024 EIS Availability Federal Register Notice (89 FR 90280).

The public was invited to submit protests on the Proposed RMP Amendment/Final EIS. The protest period was 30 days, from November 15 to December 16, 2024. The BLM received 60 unique protest letters.

The planning regulations at 43 CFR 1610.5-2 outline the requirements for filing a valid protest. Resolution of protests is delegated to the BLM Assistant Director for Resources and Planning whose decision on the protest is the final decision of the U.S. Department of the Interior (43 CFR 1610.5-2(b)) consistent with the BLM Delegation of Authority Manual (MS-1203 Delegation of Authority). The BLM evaluated all protest letters to determine which protest letters were complete and timely, and which persons have standing to protest. Four letters were complete and timely but were dismissed because the people who submitted the letters did not have standing to protest. The remaining 56 letters were complete and timely and were from parties who had standing to protest. Of these, 50 letters contained valid protest issues. The BLM documented the responses to the valid protest issues in a protest resolution report.

After careful review of the report by the BLM's Assistant Director for Resources and Planning, the Assistant Director concluded that the BLM followed the applicable laws, regulations, and policies and considered all relevant resource information and public input. The Assistant Director addressed the protests and issued the BLM Director's Protest Resolution Report: Greater Sage-Grouse Rangewide Planning Proposed RMP Amendment and Final Environmental Impact Statement on the BLM's website[8]. All valid protest issues were denied.

Ongoing Actions

The BLM has numerous ongoing reviews of proposed projects, ranging from proposals for which the BLM has just received an application to those where the BLM is nearing a decision. The extent to which this

[8] BLM Director's Protest Resolution Report is available at: https://www.blm.gov/programs/planning-and-nepa/public-participation/protest-resolution-reports.

Approved RMP Amendment will apply to these ongoing projects will depend on the stage of the project in the NEPA review and decision-making process. To maintain the orderly administration and management of the public lands, the BLM will be consistent with the Approved RMP Amendment unless the BLM has completed a Draft EIS or Environmental Assessment for the project before the publication of the Approved RMP Amendment. The decision for such projects and any subsequent authorizations associated with the approval (such as the issuance of an ROW authorized by a decision) will be exempted from the requirements of this effort's approved planning decision. The BLM has the discretion to apply the Approved RMP Amendment to projects that are substantially underway and will seek input from the project proponent prior to exercising such discretion.

In addition, the following projects will not be subject to the decisions made in the Approved RMP Amendment:

- BLM Wyoming 2026 First Quarter Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale (DOI-BLM-WY-0000-2025-0003-EA)
- BLM Wyoming 2026 Second Quarter Competitive Oil and Gas Lease Sale (DOI-BLM-WY-0000-2026-0001-EA)

AVAILABILITY OF THE APPROVED RMP AMENDMENT

The ROD and the Approved RMP Amendment may be obtained online on the BLM's National NEPA Register at: https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2016719/510. Limited print copies are available upon request from the Bureau of Land Management; Wyoming State Office; 5353 Yellowstone Road; Cheyenne, WY 82009.

APPROVAL

I hereby certify that BLM has considered all alternatives, information, analyses, and objections submitted by state, Tribal, and local governments, and public commenters for consideration by BLM and cooperating agencies in developing the environmental impact statement. In consideration of the foregoing, I approve the Greater Sage-grouse Rangewide Planning Resource Management Plan Amendment.

KRISTINA KIRBY Digitally signed by KRISTINA KIRBY
Date: 2025.12.19 11:28:51 -07'00'

Kristina Kirby
Acting Wyoming State Director
Bureau of Land Management

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Wyoming Approved RMP Amendment

Goal
Manage lands in a manner that will protect the quality of scientific, ecological, and environmental values that will provide food and habitat for fish and wildlife and domestic animals, and that will provide for outdoor recreation and human occupancy and uses consistent with Section 102 of the Federal Land Policy Management Act (as amended). Manage GRSG habitat to support habitat connectivity and persistent, healthy populations, consistent with BLM's Special Status Species (SSS) Management Policy (BLM-M-6840) and in coordination and cooperation with state wildlife agencies and appropriate state authorities.

HABITAT MANAGEMENT AREA ALIGNMENTS

The BLM applies its management allocations and management direction for GRSG within Habitat Management Areas (HMAs). Although the BLM has identified and mapped the HMAs to encompass multiple land ownerships, reflecting the wide-ranging ecological needs of GRSG, the management allocations and management direction that follow only apply to BLM-administered lands, including areas where BLM administers subsurface minerals. Following are the rangewide HMA categories and the additional, Wyoming-specific HMA. Refer to **Appendix 1**, **Table and Maps, Map 3 and Table 1**.

Rangewide Habitat Management Areas
Priority Habitat Management Areas (PHMA) have the highest value to maintaining sustainable GRSG populations and can include breeding, late brood-rearing, winter concentration areas, and migration or connectivity corridors. The BLM intent for these areas is to maintain and enhance habitat conditions that will support persistent and healthy GRSG populations through management to minimize habitat loss and degradation. Areas are delineated using core and connectivity data or maps and other resource information that the BLM has identified in coordination with respective state and federal agencies. HMAs are delineated as approximate boundaries and representations of habitat, and therefore there may be areas of non-habitat contained within these boundaries.
General Habitat Management Areas (GHMA) are lands that are, or have the potential to become, occupied seasonal or year-round habitat outside of PHMA, managed to sustain GRSG populations. These areas are defined differentially by state wildlife management agencies but generally are of poorer GRSG habitat quality with reduced occupancy when compared to PHMA. Some state wildlife agencies have identified areas of GHMA as important for restoration, connectivity, or seasonal habitats. The intent for GHMA is to maintain habitat conditions to support GRSG populations consistent with the state agency designations of recovery, connectivity, or seasonal habitats. Management actions will maintain, enhance, or restore habitat for GRSG. HMAs are delineated as approximate boundaries and representations of habitat and therefore include potential or unoccupied habitat and may contain areas of non-habitat.
Wyoming
Stewardship Habitat Management Area (SHMA): GRSG habitats that are generally characterized by large percentages of private land, existing disturbance and prior and existing rights, and fragmented landscapes that continue to support substantial populations of GRSG, provide important connections between populations, and are important for maintaining GRSG populations.

Table 1. Priority Habitat Management Area (PHMA) Allocations and Management Direction

This table identifies the allocations and management direction and that will be applied in PHMA. The table describes if the Approved RMP Amendment is amending the "objective", "allocation", or "management direction" for the resource topic identified. In some instances, the Approved RMP Amendment addresses all three of these planning categories for a resource topic while in other resource topics only one or two of the categories are amended. All three planning categories are identified for each resource topic and if it is not being amended it will be identified as "N/A", not applicable. In those "N/A" instances, the 2015 or 2019 Amendment decision is not being proposed for amendment and remains in place. The existing 2015 and 2019 Amendment decisions are described in Appendix 2. Several management actions refer to existing laws, regulations, policies, or technical references. The citations in this document are based on the versions current as of ROD publication; the most current versions of these various references would be used during implementation (e.g., in 2025 the Habitat Assessment Framework is TR-6710-1 dated 2015; updated versions of the HAF or its equivalent would be applied to all actions that reference the HAF).

Maps that show where the allocations and management direction apply can be found in **Appendix 1**, Table and Maps.

Approved RMP Amendment for PHMA Objective/Allocation/Management Direction
Fluid Minerals (including geothermal)
Objective: Manage fluid mineral leasing and development (including geothermal) in GRSG habitat management areas to avoid when practicable, then minimize and voluntarily compensate for adverse impacts to GRSG habitat to the extent required under the law and BLM jurisdiction. **Management Direction:** **Development in Areas Already Leased:** When considering exploration and development on areas leased for fluid mineral resources in PHMAs, application of measures to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate potential impacts will be considered through completion of the requirements at 43 CFR Part 3162.5 (Environmental Review) and 36 CFR Part 228.108 (Surface Use Requirements). Such measures may include existing lease stipulations, project design, operator-committed measures, RMP required design features (RDFs), and local conditions of approval (COAs). The BLM will work with project proponents and the state wildlife agency to promote effective management and connectivity of seasonal habitats and PHMA to accomplish measurable GRSG conservation objectives. Surface use rights associated with existing leases will be recognized and respected. For proposed operations in PHMA, the Surface Use Plan of Operations (refer to 43CFR Part 3162.3-1(f)) shall address, at a minimum, the applicable RDFs in the RMP. RMP-defined project features reducing GRSG impacts not utilized in the Surface Use Plan of Operations based on site-specific or project-specific considerations shall be noted in the project file, along with a rationale for not including them. The BLM will evaluate whether each conservation measure is reasonable and consistent with surface use rights as part of the environmental review process (see 43 CFR Part 3101.12). **Allocations for Unleased Lands:** Open to leasing (unless already closed) subject to no surface occupancy (NSO) within 0.6 mi of leks and seasonal limitations (breeding, nesting, early brood-rearing and winter habitat) and Controlled Surface Use (CSU) (density and disturbance) in PHMA outside of the 0.6-mi NSO buffer. Refer to the following management direction. To approve waivers, exceptions or modifications based on any of the listed criteria, after coordination with the appropriate State agency, the Authorized Officer must document that the proposed action satisfies the listed criteria. If the State agency does not concur with granting the exception, the Authorized Officer must provide rationale for how the criteria are met considering the information the State provides. If the area associated with the proposed development seeking the exception or modification (e.g., well pad, compressor station) is in an area in which one of the adaptive management thresholds has been activated (refer to Adaptive Management Section), no exceptions or modification would be considered until the causal

Approved RMP Amendment for PHMA Objective/Allocation/Management Direction
factor analysis is completed. If the causal factor analysis concludes fluid minerals is or could contribute to the threshold being activated or not recovering, no exception or modification would be granted. If the analysis is inconclusive on cause, exceptions or modifications could be considered. Waivers are excluded from this consideration. Prior to granting a waiver, exception, or modification to any GRSG NSO or Disturbance Cap fluid minerals stipulation, the Authorized Officer shall comply with regulatory public review requirements, if applicable (see 43 CFR 3101). **GRSG No Surface Occupancy (NSO) Exceptions** a) **Exception 1 -** The Authorized Officer may consider and grant an exception to the NSO stipulation within 0.6 miles of occupied leks (refer to definition of lek this table) in PHMA if it is demonstrated that development and surface occupancy **has no direct impacts to or disruption of GRSG or its habitat** based on: I. The location of the proposed authorization is determined to be non-habitat (refer to **Appendix 6, Glossary)**, does not provide important connectivity between habitat areas (as determined by a wildlife biologist and confirmed by the BLM using Criteria Based Management for Non-Habitat methods outlined in this table and coordinated with the appropriate state authority), and the project includes RDFs to prevent indirect disturbance to or disruption of adjacent seasonal habitats, regardless of distance from the occupied lek, that may impair their biological function; **OR** II. Topography/areas of non-habitat create an effective barrier to impacts (e.g., protected from visual and audible disturbances to GRSG and its habitat); **OR** III. By co-locating the proposed authorization with existing disturbance, no additional impacts will be realized above those already associated with the existing similarly sized infrastructure, including indirect disturbance to or disruption of adjacent seasonal habitats that may impair their biological function. b) **Exception 2 -** An exception could be considered if the proposed location on public lands will be undertaken as an alternative to a similar action occurring on a nearby non-public lands parcel (.g., due to landownership patterns), and development on the public parcel in question will eliminate impacts on more important and/or limited GRSG habitat (e.g., wet meadows, brood-rearing habitat) on the non-public nearby parcel; this exception must also include measures sufficient to allow the BLM to conclude in its documenting analysis that such benefits will endure for the duration of the proposed action's impacts on public lands (e.g., confirmation of an easement). **GRSG NSO Modifications** The Authorized Officer may consider and grant a modification to the fluid mineral lease NSO stipulation, allowing for surface occupancy only after documenting that a review of available information, in coordination with the appropriate state agency, establishes that the NSO or a portion of the NSO area is nonessential (e.g., the lek upon which the NSO is centered is not occupied), or that the proposed action could be conditioned so as to maintain the function or utility of the site for the seasonal habitat, life-history, or behavioral needs of the GRSG, including (but not limited to) reproductive display, daytime loafing/staging activities, and nesting. While the NSO stipulation could be modified for these additional developments, they must still comply with other GRSG management actions (e.g., mitigation, disturbance cap, minerals/energy density, seasonal restrictions, RDFs) if an exception to the NSO is granted.

Approved RMP Amendment for PHMA Objective/Allocation/Management Direction
GRSG NSO Waiver The Authorized Officer may consider and grant a waiver of the NSO stipulation on an existing lease after documenting, in coordination with the appropriate State agency, that the lease with the GRSG NSO stipulation is no longer in PHMA. This will only be applicable on leases that were issued when the parcel was in PHMA, then the PHMA boundaries were subsequently adjusted through the appropriate planning process.
GRSG Disturbance Cap Exceptions and Waivers For fluid mineral (including geothermal) disturbance cap exceptions and waivers, follow the direction for Disturbance Cap exceptions and conditions section. **Disturbance Cap Modifications** None. **Disturbance Cap Waivers** The Authorized Officer may consider and grant a waiver of the stipulation on an existing lease if the area mapped as PHMA when the lease was issued is no longer mapped as such through the appropriate planning process. **GRSG Seasonal Constraints/Stipulations Exception** The Authorized Officer may consider and provide temporary relief from seasonal constraints (refer to the 2015 RMPA; **Appendix 2**) by granting an exception after documenting the review of available information, including best available science, associated with the site proposed for the exception. This direction applies in PHMA, GHMA, and all other state identified HMAs. While the BLM considers information from all sources, the state wildlife agency can provide information directly associated with GRSG use, including, if available, whether GRSG populations are not using the seasonal habitat during that year's seasonal life cycle period if available. Based on this information and recommendation, and documented variability in seasonal conditions (e.g., early/late spring, long/heavy winter), use patterns, or other applicable information the Authorized Officer may consider a one-time exception if development associated with it will not have direct/indirect negative impacts on GRSG populations and/or their habitat. **Seasonal Constraints/Stipulations Modifications** The BLM can grant modifications to seasonal restrictions if the BLM, in coordination with the state wildlife agency and other appropriate state authorities, on a case-by-case basis, determines that granting the modification will not adversely impact the population being protected. The Authorized Officer may grant a modification to the dates and areas associated with seasonal timing restrictions after documenting the review of available information associated with the site proposed for the modification based on one of the criteria described below: 1) The geographic and temporal conditions demonstrate that any modification (shortening/extending seasonal timeframes) is justified on the basis that it serves to better protect or enhance GRSG and its habitat than if the strict application of seasonal timing restrictions is implemented. Under this scenario, modifications can occur if one or more of the following conditions can be documented: a. A proposed authorization is expected to have beneficial or neutral impacts on GRSG and its habitat. b. Topography or other factors eliminate direct and indirect impacts from visibility and audibility to GRSG and its habitat. c. There are documented local variations that indicate the seasonal life cycle periods are different than presented. 2) Modifications are needed to address an immediate public health and/or safety concern in a timely manner (e.g., maintaining a road impacted by flooding).

Approved RMP Amendment for PHMA Objective/Allocation/Management Direction
Seasonal Constraints/Stipulations Waiver The Authorized Officer may consider and grant a waiver of the stipulation on an existing lease if the area that was mapped as a GRSG habitat management area (regardless of type) when the lease was issued is no longer mapped as such through the appropriate planning process. **Tracking Waivers, Exceptions, or Modifications** Refer to **Appendix 3**, Greater Sage-grouse Monitoring Framework, Measure 6 for tracking requirements.
Saleable Minerals/Mineral Materials
Objective: N/A **Allocation**: Open for new free use permits and expansion of existing pits subject to occupancy, seasonal limitations, disturbance, density, and the BLM can verify the expansion will not adversely impact any adjoining seasonal habitat, otherwise closed. **Management Direction:** N/A
Nonenergy Leasable Minerals
Objective: N/A **Allocation**: Open to the expansion of existing operations subject to occupancy, seasonal limitations, disturbance, and density, but closed to new leases except in situations required for human health and safety (e.g., ventilation shafts for underground mining operations). **Management Direction**: Apply required design features, best management practices, and minimization measures identified in the existing GRSG amendments (refer to **Appendix 2**).
Coal
Objective: N/A **Allocation:** N/A **Management Direction**: Unless a suitability process has already been conducted that considered GRSG HMAs, at the time an application for a new coal lease or lease modification is submitted to the BLM, the BLM will determine whether the lease application area is "unsuitable" for all or certain coal mining methods pursuant to 43 CFR Part 3461.5. Coordination with the appropriate state agency and the determination of essential habitat for maintaining GRSG as per the suitability criteria at 43 CFR Part 3461.5(o)(1) will consider site-specific information associated with lease nomination areas as part of the unsuitability process.
Locatable Minerals
Objective: N/A **Allocation:** Open, unless currently withdrawn. **Management Direction**: N/A

Approved RMP Amendment for PHMA Objective/Allocation/Management Direction
Major Rights of Way

Objective: N/A

Allocation: Avoidance for new major Rights of Way (ROWs); linear features such as overhead transmission lines, distribution pipelines, and large non-linear surface disturbing projects. Refer to Appendix 6, Glossary).

Management Direction:

If during consideration of a proposed project-level authorization for a ROW action, the determination of whether it is a major or minor ROW is questioned, with supporting rationale, the Authorized Officer, in consultation with the BLM State Office lead(s), will make the final determination.

Authorizations may be granted if one of the criteria below and the additional conditions are met.

Major Rights of Way Avoidance Criteria:

1) RMP designated corridors within PHMA are open to consideration of a new major ROW in the category for which the corridor was designated if the proposed authorization within the existing ROW corridor results in impacts similar to those already described in the environmental analysis to establish the corridor, including indirect disturbance to or disruption of adjacent seasonal habitats; **OR**
2) The ROW can be routed through, or located within, non-habitat. Non-habitat will be determined by a wildlife biologist and confirmed by the BLM using the Criteria Based Management for Non-Habitat described in this table and coordinated with state wildlife agencies and other appropriate state authority. ROWs shall minimize disruption of connectivity between habitat areas and should be designed to prevent indirect disturbance to or disruption of adjacent seasonal habitats (as disclosed in the environmental analysis);
    a. Applicants must clearly demonstrate to the Authorized Officer, in consultation with the BLM State Office lead(s), that no viable alternatives exist for placement of facilities outside the avoidance area prior to analyzing placement within an avoidance area.
    b. ROWs may be placed in PHMA if doing so reduces the risk of wildfire, decreases risk to human health and safety, or meets national security needs. The ROW must be the minimum necessary to achieve the ROW's purpose and will not otherwise be viable in an area that is "open" to ROWs; **OR**
3) The proposed location on federal lands will be undertaken as an alternative to a similar action occurring on a nearby non-federal lands parcel, and development on the public parcel in question will eliminate impacts on more important and/or limited GRSG habitat (e.g., wet meadows, brood-rearing habitat) on the non-federal nearby parcel. The ROW must be the minimum necessary to achieve the ROW's purpose and will not otherwise be viable in an area that is "open" to ROWs.

If one or multiple of the avoidance criteria can be met, the ROW must also meet the following conditions in order to be permitted in PHMA:

a) Micro-siting while developing the major ROW is required to limit impacts and maintain connectivity corridors between seasonal habitats. This includes using topography and non-habitat as effective barriers to adverse impacts and co-location with existing, similarly sized, infrastructure; **AND**
b) Where the development of the major ROW is outside a designated corridor, apply minimization measures (e.g., disturbance cap, seasonal constraints, tall structure limitations, RDFs, nest and perch deterrents); **AND**
c) Residual direct and indirect impacts will be mitigated consistent with state mitigation policies or requirements as applicable.

If requiring mitigation both inside and outside of RMP-designated corridors disincentivizes location in the designated corridor or another route that has lesser impacts to GRSG, the Authorized Officer may consider adjusting the mitigation requirement if doing so reduces impacts to GRSG compared to an alignment that otherwise requires mitigation (e.g., development in an RMP-designated corridor that has existing transmission lines already present). The Authorized Officer shall coordinate with the applicable state agencies to ensure compliance with compensatory mitigation to the extent required by state policies or regulations.

Approved RMP Amendment for PHMA Objective/Allocation/Management Direction
Minor Rights-of-Way
Objective: N/A **Allocation:** Avoidance as per direction in the 2015 GRSG plan amendment. **Management Direction:** N/A
Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)
No ACECs are designated.
Livestock Grazing
Objective (RM-1): Manage livestock grazing in GRSG habitat in a manner that meets or makes progress toward meeting Wyoming Land Health Standard (LHS) 4 ("*Rangelands are capable of sustaining viable populations and a diversity of native plant and animal species appropriate to the habitat. Habitats that support or could support threatened species, endangered species, species of special concern, or sensitive species will be maintained or enhanced.*") and applies the guideline that addresses "restoring, maintaining, or enhancing habitats of...special status species to promote their conservation" (43 CFR Part 4180.2(e)(9) or subsequent changes to regulations or policy). **Allocation (RM-1)**: The presence of GRSG HMAs will not affect whether an area is available for livestock grazing. During livestock grazing authorization renewals, Allotment Management Plan (or its functional equivalent) development, or other appropriate implementation-level planning, BLM will follow all applicable livestock grazing regulations including 43 CFR Subpart 4120 – Grazing Management and 43 CFR 4180.2 Standards and Guidelines for Grazing Administration or any subsequent revisions, and the best management practices and design features in **Appendix 5**. **Management Direction** **RM-1**: During the Land Health Assessment (LHA) process, use the criteria identified in the Sage-Grouse HAF (BLM-TR-6710-1 - Stiver et al. 2015 – as revised) and other BLM approved methodology to provide multiple lines of evidence (consistent with BLM Manual 1283) for determining whether vegetation structure, condition, and composition are meeting or making significant progress towards meeting the LHS Wyoming Standard 4. This includes referencing appropriate Ecological Site Descriptions (ESD), associated State and Transition Model (STM) and existing ecological condition information. For GRSG, the standard will generally be met when vegetation conditions provide for suitable GRSG habitat at the HAF site-scale (refer to **Table 4-1, Appendix 4**), based on existing ecological condition, ecological potential, and existing vegetation information. Where the LHS Wyoming Standard 4 (specific to GRSG) is not being met – as indicated by an unsuitable site-scale HAF assessment relative to site potential – and current livestock grazing is a significant causal factor (43 CFR Part 4180, BLM H-4180-1 or subsequent changes to regulations or policy), adjustments to livestock grazing practices and activities will be made at the authorization, allotment or activity plan level and in accordance with applicable regulations (43 CFR Part 4180.2) or subsequent changes to regulations or policy). Any adjustments to livestock grazing will be made based on current ecological potential according to ESD, associated STM and existing ecological state. **RM-2**: In PHMA, when fully processing livestock grazing authorizations where the LHS Wyoming Standard 4 is not being met (specific to GRSG habitat) and current livestock grazing has been identified as a significant causal factor (43 CFR Part 4180, BLM H-4180-1 or subsequent changes to regulations or policy), the NEPA analysis must include in at least one alternative with specific thresholds and defined responses that would be included in the terms and conditions of the livestock grazing authorization if that alternative was selected.

Approved RMP Amendment for PHMA Objective/Allocation/Management Direction
One or more defined responses will allow the Authorized Officer to consider adjustments to livestock grazing during the term of the authorization that have already been analyzed in a NEPA document. Thresholds specific to GRSG habitat will be developed to make significant progress toward fulfillment of LHS (43 CFR Part 4180.2 or subsequent changes to regulations or policy) and maintain or move PHMA toward providing suitable GRSG habitat (e.g., **Table 4-1, Appendix 4**). Thresholds and defined responses will be designed to address the HAF assessment rating that warranted the Land Health Evaluation finding, and consider ecological site potential, and relevant locally specific conditions, and LHS. **RM-3**: During the livestock grazing authorization renewal process, evaluate all existing livestock management range improvements with respect to their effect on GRSG and GRSG habitat. Consider removal or modification of projects that negatively affect GRSG or GRSG habitat. Range improvements needed for management of sensitive species habitat or other sensitive resources should be maintained but consider implementing improvements in a manner less impactful to GRSG (Refer to **Appendix 5** for Livestock Grazing Management Best Management Practices and Design Features). **RM-4**: Range improvements are defined as any activity or program relating to rangelands which is designed to improve forage, change vegetative composition, control patterns of use, provide water, stabilize soil and water conditions and provide habitat for livestock and wildlife. Design new range improvement projects to enhance livestock distribution or management and to control the duration, timing and intensity of grazing. They may include, application of new technologies such as voluntary virtual fencing. In PHMA, any new structural range improvements should be placed along existing disturbance corridors or in the least suitable habitat, to the extent practicable, and are subject to appropriate design features (**Appendix 5**) and NEPA. **RM-5:** Identify fences in high-risk areas in coordination with the state wildlife agency or other appropriate state authority. Priority should be given to areas within 1.2 miles of an occupied lek (Christiansen 2009; Stevens 2011) or other areas identified as important seasonal habitats or areas of GRSG concentration in coordination with the state wildlife agency or other appropriate state authority. Evaluate if the fence is needed and/or meets BLM wildlife friendly fencing standards (BLM H 1741). If the fence is unnecessary, remove it. If the fence is needed to support management, install high visibility fence markers in high risk or important areas (Christiansen 2009; Stevens 2011). Where marking fences does not reduce fence-related GRSG mortality, modify fences. Modification could include re-routing, altering construction materials, using seasonal drop fencing, or limiting perching of predators. New fences within high-risk areas will only be authorized if at least one of the following criteria is met: a) It is consistent with the overall RMP GRSG objective; **OR** b) Local terrain features shield nearby habitat or reduce the habitat importance; **OR** c) The fence is constructed with high visibility markers to reduce GRSG strikes. Evaluating existing fences to assess mortality risk is recommended in all GRSG habitats.
Wild Horse and Burro
Objective: N/A **Allocation: N/A** **Management Direction:** **Management Action 1**: Where wild horses and burros overlap with GRSG: a. Manage wild horse and burro populations within established Appropriate Management Levels (AML); **AND** b. Incorporate GRSG habitat objectives into wild horse and burro management (e.g., herd management area plans, AML) monitoring, and gather prioritization, with prioritization of such activities in PHMA, then GHMA.

Approved RMP Amendment for PHMA Objective/Allocation/Management Direction
Management Action 2: Manage wild horse and burros herd management areas in GRSG habitat (or portions of the herd management area overlapping or within GRSG habitat) within the established AML ranges to achieve and maintain GRSG habitat objectives and achieve or make significant progress towards achieving LHS, considering the full suite of approaches to maintain AML, including temporary fertility control and non-reproducing, or partially non-reproducing herds. **Management Action 3**: If GRSG site-scale habitat objectives are not being met in PHMA and GHMA, evaluate AMLs and adjust, if necessary, through the NEPA process where wild horse or burro use is identified as significant causal factor to not meeting LHS, or is a factor in the area not meeting the GRSG habitat objectives.
Predation
Objective: Reduce predation from increased numbers of predators resulting from anthropogenic disturbance and habitat loss and function. **Allocation: N/A** **Management Direction:** **Management Action 1:** Apply minimization measures and BMPs to new, existing, and renewal of authorizations and activities to minimize threats from predators shown to pose a threat to GRSG, consistent with applicable law. This includes, but is not limited to stopping, slowing, and/or discouraging the incursion of predators, increased levels of predators, or predators expanding into new areas. Minimization measures and BMPs include, but are not limited to, the following: a. Limit the footprint for all proposed projects to the smallest area necessary to achieve the project objectives in order to reduce habitat loss. b. Place project components within existing disturbance areas whenever possible to minimize habitat loss. c. Eliminate or minimize external food resources from anthropogenic sources (e.g., trash resources from human activities, road killed animals, carcass dumps). d. Reduce or prevent opportunities for raven and raptor perching and nesting through such measures as nest/perch deterrents and regular maintenance of the nest/perch deterrents. **Management Action 2**: For authorizations that require expanded, new, renewal, or non-routine maintenance of energy, mining, or transmission related infrastructure as identified in **Table 3-4** in **Appendix 3** (Greater Sage-grouse Monitoring Framework) in PHMA, the project proponent is required to submit a predator subsidy management plan to minimize influx and support of new predators as a result of the project (refer to Appendix 6, Glossary for definition of "non-routine maintenance"). The requirement to prepare a predator subsidy management plan could be waived as a result of site-specific circumstances and with state Director concurrence. The plan shall be coordinated with state and Federal agencies (e.g., USFWS and APHIS) as appropriate. The plan will: a. Outline how the project will be designed to minimize threats to GRSG beyond the natural range of variability from predators; b. Describe project design features to reduce or eliminate predator subsidies (e.g., reducing raven and raptor perching and nesting by burying powerlines, removing trash food subsidies, minimizing infrastructure, locating any necessary structures out of line of site of breeding and nesting habitat, using tubular non-branching material for structures); c. Describe and outline the coordination and concurrence with state and Federal agencies, if appropriate (e.g., USFWS, APHIS). The project proponent may participate in non-lethal control of predators (e.g., removal of raven nests before eggs are present) with the written consent and permits from the appropriate agency and as determined at the site-specific analysis; d. Include a monitoring strategy to assess efficacy of the predator subsidy management plan and GRSG population response. **Management Action 3:** The BLM will collaborate with appropriate state agencies, other landowners, federal agencies (e.g., USFWS, APHIS), and Tribal governments, as appropriate and consistent with BLM policy, in their efforts to minimize impacts from predators on GRSG where impacts have been documented, including providing needed authorizations to support predator management actions.

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Application of Habitat Objectives
Objective: **Objective SSS [X]:** Within GRSG habitat management areas provide suitable habitat by managing for connected mosaics of sagebrush and associated communities that provide for seasonal habitats, dispersal, and migration, while limiting widespread anthropogenic disturbances and fragmentation. This objective will be accomplished by applying RMP land use allocations and management actions among HMAs, proactive habitat treatments, and project-level application of mitigation (refer to Mitigation direction in this Approved RMP Amendment) for internal and external project proposals. **Objective SSS [Y]:** Manage GRSG habitat management areas to provide seasonal habitats at the HAF site-scale (Level 4) by providing for habitat characteristics that support seasonal habitat needs, including adequate protective cover and food needed to survive and reproduce. Seasonal habitats may include areas where sagebrush is the current dominant vegetation type, sagebrush is a primary shrub species within the various states of the ecological site or dominated by other vegetation types but still provides GRSG habitats, such as mesic areas. This objective will be accomplished through the combination of RMP land use allocations and management actions and restoration based on ecological potential, current vegetative condition, and existing seasonal values and the project-level application of mitigation (refer to Mitigation direction in this Approved RMP Amendment) for internal and external project proposals. **Allocation:** N/A **Management Direction:** **Management Action SSS [X1]:** Assess the suitability of GRSG habitat at HAF mid- and fine-scales (HAF Levels 2 and 3, respectively) based on the methods in the Sage-grouse HAF (Stiver et al. 2015, BLM TR 6710-1, as revised; see **Appendix 4**). **Management Action SSS [X2]:** Design and implement projects that will maintain or improve habitat suitability, availability, and connectivity, based on site location, existing seasonal values, and habitat needs using the results of mid- and fine-scale habitat assessments and other complementary research, tools, or information and in coordination with partners across land management jurisdictions. **Management Action SSS [Y1]:** Assess suitability of GRSG habitat at the HAF site-scale (Level 4) based on the methods in Sage-grouse HAF (Stiver et al. 2015, BLM TR 6710-1, as revised; **Appendix 4**) utilizing current geographically applicable research on seasonal habitat requisites of GRSG (see **Appendix 4**). Updates to seasonal habitat indicators and ESDs will be developed locally and coordinated with partners (see **Appendix 4**). **Management Action SSS [Y2]:** Maintain, improve, or restore the suitability of GRSG seasonal habitats using the Habitat Indicators Table (see **Appendix 4**) to inform measurable project objectives during implementation-level planning for BLM-permitted and BLM-initiated site-specific actions in HMAs, in coordination with applicable partners. Use the results of site-scale habitat assessments and other best available information to inform management decisions and the design and implementation of habitat projects.
Mitigation
Objective: None **Allocation:** None **Management Direction:** **Management Action:** Adopt the State of Wyoming's GRSG Compensatory Mitigation Framework to the extent consistent with federal law, regulations, and policy. In all GRSG habitat, when authorizing third-party actions in designated GRSG habitat, the BLM will seek to achieve the planning-level GRSG management goals and objectives through implementation of mitigation and management actions, consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law. Under this Plan Amendment, management would be consistent with the Greater Sage-Grouse goals and objectives, and in conformance with BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species

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Management. In accordance with BLM Manual 6840, the BLM will undertake planning decisions, actions and authorizations "to minimize or eliminate threats affecting the status of [Greater Sage-Grouse] or to improve the condition of [Greater Sage-Grouse] habitat" across the planning area. Accordingly, before authorizing third-party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM will complete the following steps, in alignment with the Governor of Wyoming's Executive Order 2015-4 (July 29, 2015): 1. Work jointly with the WGFD to evaluate projects and recommend mitigation in the form of avoidance and minimization. 2. The WGFD will determine if the State requires or recommends any additional mitigation – including compensatory mitigation – under State regulations, policies, or programs related to the conservation of GRSG. 3. Incorporate state required or recommended mitigation into the BLM's NEPA decision-making process, if the WGFD determines that compensatory mitigation is required to address impacts to GRSG habitat as a part of State policy or authorization, or if a proponent voluntarily offers mitigation. 4. Analyze whether the compensatory mitigation (deferring to the appropriate State authority to quantify habitat offsets, durability, and other aspects used to determine the recommended compensatory mitigation action): • achieves measurable outcomes for GRSG habitat function on a landscape scale as determined by WGFD that are at least equal to the lost or degraded values in accordance with the Governor of Wyoming's Executive Order 2015-4. • provides benefits that are in place for at least the duration of the impacts. • accounts for a level of risk that the mitigation action may fail or not persist for the full duration of the impact. 5. Ensure mitigation outcomes are consistent with the State of Wyoming's mitigation strategy and principles outlined in 2019 GRSG ARMPA Appendix C, The Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat Management Strategy. The BLM has determined that compensatory mitigation must be voluntary unless required by other applicable law and in recognition that State authorities may also require compensatory mitigation. Therefore, consistent with valid existing rights and applicable law, when authorizing third-party actions that result in habitat loss and degradation, the BLM will consider voluntary compensatory mitigation actions only as a component of compliance with a State mitigation plan, program, or authority, or when offered voluntarily by a project proponent. Project-specific analysis will be necessary to determine how a compensatory mitigation proposal addresses impacts from a proposed action. The BLM will cooperate with the State to determine appropriate project design and alignment with State policies and requirements, including those regarding compensatory mitigation. When the BLM is considering compensatory mitigation as a component of the project proponent's submission or based on a mitigation requirement from the State, the BLM's NEPA analysis would evaluate the need to avoid or minimize impacts of the proposed project and achieve the goals and objectives of this RMPA. The BLM will defer to the appropriate State authority to quantify habitat offsets, durability, and other aspects used to determine the recommended compensatory mitigation action.
Disturbance Cap
Objective: N/A **Allocation**: N/A **Management Direction**: If direct habitat disturbance from existing and proposed infrastructure developments exceeds either: 1) 5% at the project scale (refer to description in the *Numerator* section below), or 2) 3% at the HAF fine-scale habitat selection area.

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New infrastructure projects will be deferred to the extent allowable under applicable laws or valid existing rights: a. until such time as the percentage of habitat disturbance in the areas has been reduced below the cap threshold through restoration of existing disturbance to meeting habitat objectives or increasing the amount of suitable habitat through restoration, or b. redesigned to not result in additional surface disturbance (co-location), redesigned to move it outside of habitat in PHMA (refer to non-habitat criteria in this table), or redesigned to move it outside PHMA. **Disturbance Cap Calculation** <u>Numerator</u> The disturbance cap calculation is limited to the following specific activities, whether existing projects or new proposals (refer to **Appendix 3** for additional details on how these items will be monitored): • Oil and gas wells and development facilities • Coal mines • Wind developments (e.g., towers, sub-stations) • Solar fields • Geothermal development facilities • Mining (active locatable, nonenergy leasable and saleable/mineral material developments) • Roads; transportation features with a maintenance intensity of level 3 or 5 (BLM Technical Note 422 – Roads and Trails Terminology, 2006 or as updated) and does not include two-tracks • Railroads • Power lines • Communication towers • Other vertical infrastructure, as well as developed rights-of-way with habitat loss (e.g., pipelines) In addition to the specific activities listed above, the following additional activities will be incorporated into the numerator at the project scale: • Coal bed methane ponds • Meteorological towers (e.g., wind energy testing) • Nuclear energy facilities • Airport facilities and infrastructure • Hydroelectric plants/facilities • Disturbances associated with the State of Wyoming's Disturbance Density Calculation Tool (DDCT) processes (e.g., wildfire, agricultural). Agriculture disturbance data will be provided by the state. Where such data are available, this disturbance is measured by the footprint of direct disturbance of the PHMA area where habitat is removed (including staging areas, dispersed structures, parking lots, and equipment storage areas), or by the distance between the outermost lines for transmission lines. A disturbed area is included in the numerator until it has been restored to provide equal or improved habitat function as was provided by the area before the disturbance. When considering new project proposals, any project associated with the above list that has been approved/authorized but not yet constructed should be treated as though it were already constructed when calculating the disturbance cap to account for authorized but not yet constructed disturbance. No other activities or

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actions beyond those listed above are included when calculating the cap. BLM will coordinate with state agencies and use available HAF and land health data in determining if the habitat function of an area has been restored. Consistent with the BLM's responsibility to consider cumulative impacts when making decisions for activities on public lands, the disturbance percentage includes acres from the above disturbances regardless of land ownership, where such data are available. This will only inform decision-making on public lands and cannot impact private property rights. Wildfire and agriculture will not be included in the numerator at the HAF fine-scale. Denominator At the project scale, the assessment area (denominator) is determined by identifying the extent of the GRSG PHMA that supports the GRSG population potentially affected by the proposed project that is also located in PHMA; it is not to be limited to the area where indirect impacts are anticipated. The project scale denominator should include the PHMA used by the potentially affected local GRSG population, including the associated seasonal habitats and the transition zones between those habitats within PHMA associated with where the project is proposed. If sufficient monitoring information is not available to identify the portions of the PHMA used by the potentially affected local GRSG population, identify project level boundaries using an approach similar to the DDCT approach developed by the State of Wyoming: 1) Determine potentially affected occupied leks (refer to definition of lek this table) by placing a 4-mile buffer around the proposed area of physical disturbance related to the proposed project. All occupied leks located within the 4-mile project buffer and within PHMA will be considered affected by the project. 2) Next, place a 4-mile buffer around each of the affected occupied leks. 3) All PHMA within the 4-mile project buffer, combined with the 4-mile lek buffer(s), creates the project analysis area for each individual project, absent other monitoring data. If there are no occupied leks within the 4-mile project buffer, the project scale analysis area will be that portion of the 4-mile project buffer within PHMA. "Undetermined leks" and other similarly defined state-based lek categories can be considered as occupied leks based on inclusion from the state wildlife agency or appropriate state authority. At the HAF fine-scale, the denominator is the acres of PHMA within the boundaries of the HAF fine-scale habitat delineation area. Calculation of the 3% cap will include all acres of PHMA in the fine-scale area as the denominator. At either scale, all areas in PHMA will be included in the denominator unless specific information documents areas of non-habitat or unsuitable habitat (e.g., assessment process described in the Criteria Based Management for Non-habitat section, seasonal habitat maps for the HAF fine-scale assessment area, areas that are unsuitable for all seasonal habitats using HAF site-scale techniques). These areas are treated neither as habitat nor disturbance, which results in the area being removed from the denominator piece of the formula. The denominator includes all lands, regardless of land ownership, to help the BLM consider the cumulative impacts of disturbances on GRSG when considering projects on public lands. **Disturbance Cap Exceptions** Authorized Officer may consider projects on public lands that could result in exceeding the disturbance cap across all ownership at the **project scale** only if the project meets the criteria for one of the following categories of exceptions and also meets the following conditions applicable to that exception: **Categories for Disturbance Cap Exceptions:** a. If the disturbance is associated with the renewal or re-authorization of existing infrastructure in previously disturbed sites or expansions of existing infrastructure that do not result in new direct, indirect, or cumulative impacts on GRSG and its habitat, and is documented.

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b. If a technical team evaluates and concludes site-specific GRSG habitat and population information, combined with project design elements – including voluntary compensatory mitigation, indicates the proposed project is expected to improve the condition of GRSG habitat within the proposed project analysis area. The technical team should consist of, at a minimum, a BLM field office biologist and a biologist from the appropriate state agency. The methods, rationale, and data used in developing recommendations shall be retained as part of the project record.
c. If the disturbance is within an RMP designated utility corridors, the disturbance cap may be exceeded if site specific NEPA analysis indicates doing so will decrease impacts to GRSG habitat in comparison to siting a project outside the designated corridor. This exception is limited to projects that fulfill the use for which the corridors were designated (e.g., transmission lines, pipelines) and the designated width of a corridor will not be exceeded as a result of any project co-location. The disturbance cap cannot exceed 3% at the HAF fine-scale. A plan amendment will be required for the development of new corridors and, as necessary, will need to appropriately address any changes in the disturbance cap.
d. If the environmental review document(s) explains how the GRSG RMP goals and objectives will be met, including avoidance first (e.g., locating the proposed projects outside PHMA, colocation within footprint of existing disturbance), then minimization (including application of RDFs, etc.) with appropriate documentation. The environmental review document must also consider the cumulative effects of other exceptions granted in adjacent project scale units. If avoidance is not possible and minimization does not address all direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts, voluntary compensatory mitigation can be considered, in coordination with the appropriate state agency.
If one or more of the exception criteria can be met, the activity associated with the disturbance must also meet all of the following conditions in order to be permitted:
a. All disturbance cap exceptions MUST have concurrence from the State Director.
b. If the exception relies on voluntary compensatory mitigation, and also in compliance with state authorities: 1. The mitigation must be completed prior to the disturbance that results in the exceedance of the disturbance cap and provide the same or better value habitat based on site limitations, **AND** 2. The compensation must be implemented in the same HAF fine-scale unit as the potential development. Consideration may be given to providing compensatory mitigation in adjacent fine-scale HAF areas if doing so will more effectively provide the offsetting benefit.
c. If proposed disturbance cap exception is requested in an area that has met one of the adaptive management thresholds, no exceptions to the disturbance cap at the project scale will be considered until the causal factor analysis is completed and cause identified and corrected unless the disturbance is needed for the protection of human life and safety.
d. Disturbance cap exceptions (either Project or HAF fine scale) will be tracked and considered in cumulative analyses for any proposed development within the same appropriate biological area. All requests for the use of compensatory mitigation to exceed the disturbance cap should be reviewed by the technical team for likelihood of success and efficacy of offsetting impacts to the affected habitats and associated populations.
e. There will be no exceptions to the 3% PHMA disturbance cap at the **HAF fine-scale** in any state unless: i. The disturbance is needed for the protection of human life and safety.
f. In the event of a conflict between the project scale and HAF fine-scale disturbance caps, the Authorized Officer may consider and grant an exception to the disturbance cap at the HAF fine-scale if, in coordination with the appropriate state agency, it is determined that the impact to GRSG of the habitat disturbance resulting in the disturbance cap being met is better assessed at the project scale.
g. Apply the disturbance cap to the extent consistent with applicable law and valid existing rights.

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Adaptive Management
States manage wildlife on behalf of their publics; adaptive management concerning wildlife on BLM-administered lands should therefore seek to align with state plans. Consistent with State GRSG adaptive management processes, the BLM will implement GRSG adaptive management after coordinating with state-level interagency adaptive management teams. FLPMA requires that to the extent consistent with the laws governing public lands, the BLM is to "[resolve] to the extent practical, inconsistencies between Federal and non-Federal Government plans," and land use plans "shall be consistent with State and local plans to the maximum extent [the Secretary] finds consistent with Federal law and the purposes of this Act." 43 USC § 1712(c)(9). See also 43 CFR 1610.3-1. Therefore, the BLM will implement adaptive management according to the following framework to inform appropriate responses to the loss of GRSG habitat on BLM-administered lands. Where the State has established an adaptive management process as part of the State's GRSG management plan, program, policy, regulation, or authority, the BLM will participate in and implement the most recent State adaptive management process to the maximum extent permitted by Federal law.[9] As the State updates their adaptive management process, the BLM will, as appropriate, participate in developing that process, and any state-level interagency adaptive management team. Once the State interagency adaptive management process is in effect, the BLM will seek to incorporate the State's adaptive management process into its approved RMP.
Criteria Based Management for Non-Habitat
Objective: N/A **Allocation:** No allocation identified but allocations can be affected if non-habitat criteria are met. **Management Direction** (can affect HMA allocation and management direction): Habitat management areas include areas where the BLM will apply goals, objectives, and management actions for conservation of GRSG. The HMAs are identified using inventory data on habitat use and occupancy and reflect the dynamic nature of the vegetation communities that make-up GRSG habitat. The HMA boundaries are not identified using survey-grade assessments (e.g., comprehensive on-the-ground surveys and edge verifications). Therefore, not every acre within an HMA boundary may be GRSG habitat. Additionally, because GRSG habitat use and occupancy and vegetation communities are dynamic, the BLM will use up-to-date high-quality information, including field investigations to make adjustments to the management actions to be applied within identified HMA boundaries. In accordance with existing law, regulation and policy, inventories will continue to be conducted to provide information on GRSG habitat and distribution (BLM Manual 6840). Non-habitat consists of areas that lack the ecological potential to provide principal habitat components necessary to support GRSG. In the mapped GRSG HMAs, there may be areas of non-habitat where conformance with the RMP will not support GRSG conservation. Refer to definitions for existing habitat, potential habitat, and non-habitat in Appendix 6, Glossary for more information. If, during consideration of a project level authorization within GRSG PHMA, GHMA, and SHMA potential non-habitat is identified by the BLM, a project-specific review should be conducted by a wildlife biologist or reviewed and accepted for confirmation by the BLM. This review should use published, scientific methods (preferably more than one) for identifying GRSG habitat (e.g., Stiver et. al. 2015 [as revised], ESDs and associated STMs) and be coordinated with the appropriate state agencies. Any discrepancies between the mapped GRSG HMAs and the site-specific conditions will be disclosed, with supporting data (e.g., vegetation monitoring, state and transition models, ecological site descriptions) and analyzed as a component of the NEPA process. However, indirect and direct impacts to adjacent GRSG populations and their habitats, including potential habitat, still need to be considered when planning and authorizing projects in these non-habitat areas.

[9] Wyoming has an established interagency adaptive management process, outlined in Appendix I of the State of Wyoming Executive Order 2019-3 (WY EO 2019-3). The adaptive management actions provided in Appendix I of WY EO 2019-3 were analyzed in the Final EIS as part of Alternative 2 (Greater Sage-grouse Land Use Plan Amendments and EIS).

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All management objectives and decisions associated with each management area type will apply unless all the following criteria are documented: a. Project is proposed in verified non-habitat. b. There are no indirect impacts to adjacent habitat or individual or populations of GRSG occupying these adjacent areas due to project design and required design features (e.g., minimize noise, preclude tall structures, require perch deterrents), as demonstrated in the project's NEPA document. Indirect impact consideration includes the following: (1) The project does not impact connectivity, i. Within or between populations; or ii. Between seasonal habitats (e.g., nesting, early brood rearing, winter); or iii. Within or between existing habitat. c. Any project related access through/across GRSG habitat as verified through site-specific field checks only occurs on existing routes, and the proposed action will not include new roads or upgrades to roads that will change the vehicle use, vehicle type, or traffic volume during the applicable season of GRSG use, subject to valid existing rights, throughout all stages of the proposed project. d. Coordination with the appropriate state and federal agency biologists and other appropriate staff has been documented. If coordination is not possible the reasons and attempts at coordination will be documented. All proposed actions, including those in the same area, will need to undergo individual analysis to confirm the criteria are met prior to authorization. Exempting a proposed project from the management actions that will otherwise be required in a GRSG habitat management area identified on the maps in this RMPA because the proposal has been determined to be in non-habitat, based on the above criteria, will not change the GRSG habitat management area boundaries as identified in the RMPA. The determination to exempt a proposed project from the management actions that will otherwise be required in the GRSG habitat management area identified in maps in this RMPA, when supported by science and consistent with the criteria above, may only be made by the Authorized Officer. If the coordinating federal and/or state wildlife biologists do not concur with the Authorized Officer, then the determination will be at the discretion of the BLM State Director.
Definition of Lek
Objective: N/A **Allocation:** N/A **Management Direction:** Use the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) lek definitions (Cook et. al., 2022). Unless otherwise specifically noted, when language in the RMPs uses the term "lek" it applies to the WAFWA definition for "active lek." In Wyoming, the WAFWA active lek definition applies to "occupied leks" as defined by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. (Refer to Appendix 6, Glossary).

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Utility Scale Solar
Utility scale solar projects are projects with nameplate capacity (theoretical output registered with authorities) of 5 megawatt (MW) or higher that deliver electricity to the electricity transmission grid (refer to **Appendix 6, Glossary**). **Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Utility scale solar testing and development is excluded from all PHMA; development as ancillary support for other approved uses (e.g., mineral developments, data centers) could occur if one of the exceptions can be met. **Management Direction:** **Exception Criteria** Apply Exception Criteria as defined in the PHMA NSO Fluid Mineral Lease Exceptions.
Utility Scale Wind
Utility-scale wind projects are projects larger than 1 megawatt (MW) (refer to **Appendix 6, Glossary**). **Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Exclusion for utility scale wind testing and development (including met towers). **Management Direction:** **None**

Table 2. General Habitat Management Area (GHMA) Allocations and Management Direction

This table identifies the allocations and management direction and that will be applied in GHMA. The table describes if the Approved RMP Amendment is amending the "objective", "allocation", or "management direction" for the resource topic identified. In some instances, the Approved RMP Amendment addresses all three of these planning categories for a resource topic while in other resource topics only one or two of the categories are amended. All three planning categories are identified for each resource topic and if it is not being amended it will be identified as "N/A", not applicable. In those "N/A" instances, the 2015 or 2019 Amendment decision is not being proposed for amendment and remains in place. The existing 2015 and 2019 Amendment decisions are described in **Appendix 2**.

Maps that show where the allocations and management direction apply can be found in **Appendix 1**, **Table and Maps**.

Resource Topic	Allocation and Management Direction
Utility Scale Solar	**Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Open with applicable state specific minimization measures from the 2015 GRSG Plan Amendments, and compensatory mitigation, to maintain habitat supporting GRSG populations consistent and concurrent with state agency habitat designations (e.g., restoration, connectivity, seasonal, winter concentration, or other), and to preclude negative impacts to any PHMA habitats. **Management Direction:** N/A
Utility Scale Wind	**Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Open with applicable state specific minimization measures from the 2015 GRSG Plan Amendments, and compensatory mitigation, to maintain habitat supporting GRSG populations consistent and concurrent with state agency habitat designations (e.g., restoration, connectivity, seasonal, winter concentration, or other), and to preclude negative impacts to any PHMA habitats. **Management Direction:** N/A
Fluid Minerals (including Geothermal)	**Management, Allocation, and Management Actions**: Same management direction as identified in 2015. Open with NSO w/in 0.25 mile of leks; seasonal limitations within 2 miles of leks; standard terms and conditions outside of 2-mile lek buffer. **NSO Exception** The Authorized Officer may grant an exception if an environmental record of review determines that the action, as proposed or conditioned, will not impair the function or utility of the site for the current or subsequent seasonal habitat, life-history, or behavioral needs of GRSG due to site-specific terrain and habitat features, such as topographic features that will reduce the habitat impacts by shielding nearby habitat from disruptive factors. An exception could also be granted if it can be demonstrated by a wildlife biologist and confirmed by the BLM, based on site-specific information (using state mitigation tools such as Habitat Equivalency Analysis or Habitat Quantification Tool, or other state mitigation programs), that the impacts anticipated by the proposed activity will be offset

Resource Topic	Allocation and Management Direction
Fluid Minerals (including Geothermal) *(continued)*	through mitigation developed in coordination with the appropriate State agency that meets principles of GRSG mitigation identified in the RMP (Table 1). **NSO Modification** The Authorized Officer may grant a modification after a review of available information, and in coordination with the applicable state agency, documents that a portion of the NSO area is nonessential, or it is identified through scientific research or monitoring that the existing area is inadequate or overly protective for maintaining the function or utility of the site for the seasonal habitat, life-history, or behavioral needs of the GRSG, including but not limited to reproductive display, daytime loafing/staging activities, and nesting. Both direct and indirect impacts from a potential modification should be considered. **NSO Waiver** This stipulation may be waived for a specific lek if, in coordination with the appropriate state agency, it is determined that the GRSG lek that was occupied (refer to definition of lek Table 1) has been classified as unoccupied as determined by the Wyoming definitions (refer to **Appendix 6**, Glossary) and confirmed by the appropriate state agency. Prior to waiving the stipulations, surveys should confirm that the lek is unoccupied and not moved to another location in the vicinity. Any changes to this stipulation will be made in accordance with the land use plan and/or the regulatory provisions for such changes. **Seasonal Constraints/Stipulations** **Seasonal Constraints/Stipulations Exception** The Authorized Officer may consider and provide temporary relief from seasonal constraints by granting an exception after documenting the review of available information associated with the site proposed for the exception. This direction applies in PHMA, GHMA, SHMA, and all other state identified HMAs. While the BLM considers information from all sources, the state wildlife agency can provide information directly associated with GRSG use, including whether GRSG populations are not using the seasonal habitat during that year's seasonal life cycle period. Based on this information and recommendation, and documented variability in precipitation (e.g., early/late spring, long/heavy winter), use patterns, or other applicable information the Authorized Officer may consider a one-time exception if development associated with it will not affect GRSG habitat use. **Seasonal Constraints/Stipulations Modifications** The BLM may grant modifications on a case-by-case basis to seasonal restrictions if the BLM, in coordination with the state wildlife agency and other appropriate state authorities determines that granting the modification will not adversely impact the

Resource Topic	Allocation and Management Direction
Fluid Minerals (including Geothermal) *(continued)*	population being protected. The Authorized Officer may consider and grant a modification to the dates and areas associated with seasonal timing restrictions based on the criteria described below after documenting the review of available information associated with the site proposed for the modification, if the geographic and temporal conditions demonstrate that any seasonal modification is justified on the basis that it serves to better protect or enhance GRSG and its habitat than if the strict application of seasonal timing restrictions are implemented. Under this scenario modifications can occur if one or more of the following conditions can be documented: • A proposed authorization is expected to have beneficial or neutral impacts on GRSG and its habitat. • Topography or other factors eliminate direct and indirect visible and audible impacts to GRSG and its habitat. • There are documented local variations that indicate the seasonal life cycle periods are different than presented. • Modifications are needed to address an immediate public health and safety concern in a timely manner (e.g., maintaining a road impacted by flooding). **Season Constraints/Stipulations Waiver** The Authorized Officer may consider and grant a waiver of the stipulation on an existing lease if the area that was mapped as a GRSG habitat management area, regardless of type, when the lease was issued and is no longer mapped as such through this planning process.
Saleable Minerals/Mineral Materials	**Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Open. **Management Direction:** Apply state-specific minimization measures identified in the existing 2015 GRSG amendments (refer to **Appendix 2**).
Nonenergy Leasable Minerals	**Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Open. **Management Direction:** Apply state-specific minimization measures identified in the existing 2015 GRSG amendments (refer to **Appendix 2**)

Resource Topic	Allocation and Management Direction
Coal	**Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** N/A **Management Direction:** Unless a suitability process has already been conducted that considered GRSG HMAs, at the time an application for a new coal lease or lease modification is submitted to the BLM, the BLM will determine whether the lease application area is "unsuitable" for all or certain coal mining methods pursuant to 43 CFR Part 3461.5. Coordination with the appropriate state agency and the determination of essential habitat for maintaining GRSG as per the suitability criteria at 43 CFR Part 3461.5(o)(1) will consider site-specific information associated with lease nomination areas as part of the unsuitability process identified above.
Locatable Minerals	**Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Open, unless currently withdrawn. **Management Direction:** N/A
Major Rights of Way	**Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Open with applicable state minimization measures from 2015 GRSG amendments to maintain habitat supporting GRSG populations consistent with state agency habitat designations (e.g., restoration, connectivity, seasonal, winter concentration, or other), and to preclude negative impacts to PHMA habitats. **Management Direction:** N/A
Minor Rights-of-Way	**Objective:** N/A **Allocation:** Open with no mitigation requirements. **Management Direction:** N/A
Livestock Grazing	Same as PHMA except RM-2 does not apply
Wild Horse and Burro	Same as PHMA
Mitigation	Same as PHMA
Predation	Same as PHMA except Management Action 2 does not apply
Disturbance Cap	No GHMA disturbance cap management direction
Adaptive Management	Same as PHMA
Lek Definitions	Same as PHMA
Criteria Based Management Direction for Non-Habitat	Same as PHMA

Table 3. Stewardship Habitat Management Area (SHMA) Allocations and Management Direction

This table identifies the allocations and management direction and that will be applied in Stewardship Habitat Management Areas (SHMA). Maps that show where the allocations and management direction apply can be found in **Appendix 1**, Table and Maps.

Approved RMP Amendment for SHMA Allocations and Management Direction	
Stewardship Habitat Management Areas (SHMAs) are defined as GRSG habitats that are generally characterized by large percentages of private land, existing disturbance and prior and existing rights, and fragmented landscapes but that continue to support substantial populations of GRSG, provide important connections between populations, and are important for maintaining GRSG populations. Management in SHMA is consistent with GHMA restrictions.	
Resource Topic	**Allocation and Management Direction**
Fluid Mineral Leasing/Development	Same as GHMA
Waivers, Exceptions, and Modifications (WEMs)	Same as GHMA
Mitigation	Same as GHMA
Saleable Minerals	Same as GHMA
Locatable Minerals	Same as GHMA
Non-Energy Minerals	Same as GHMA
Coal	Same as GHMA
Wind	Same as GHMA
Solar	Same as GHMA
Rights-of-Way (Major and Minor)	Same as GHMA
Adaptive Management	Same as PHMA/GHMA
Habitat Objectives	Same as PHMA/GHMA
Disturbance Caps	Same as PHMA/GHMA
Predation	Same as GHMA
Livestock Grazing	Same as GHMA
Wild Horse and Burro Management	Same as PHMA/GHMA
Criteria Based Management for Non-habitat	Same as PHMA/GHMA

Approved RMP Amendment for SHMA Allocations and Management Direction	
Additional SHMA Management Direction	In partnership with appropriate Federal and state agencies and landowners and their representatives, encourage the development and implementation of landowner-led conservation benefit agreements in SHMA that focus on ensuring the long-term viability of GRSG populations in the area, and at a minimum identify key habitats and linkages, potential threats to GRSG and its habitat, appropriate conservation measures, and an avoid/minimize/compensate strategy that identifies mitigation opportunities within the boundaries of SHMA. Because the functional movement (i.e., movements that result in genetic connectivity) of GRSG likely occurs among leks, encourage the establishment of conservation benefit agreements that include management measures specific to maintaining occupied leks in SHMAs. Support research that identifies habitat conditions that promote or limit the movement of GRSG through a landscape to better inform management of SHMAs. Research supported by BLM and partners should be actionable. Encourage the development and implementation of invasive vegetation management strategies in SHMA. Management of invasive or encroaching native species and legacy plantings (e.g., crested wheatgrass) should also have management strategies. Strategies should be inclusive of all private and public land managers. These should include, but are not limited to: engagement of all pertinent stakeholders, inventory and monitoring requirements, prioritization approaches, treatment and removal options, restoration (to include site-specific management of livestock), responses to fire, and an adaptive management framework. Work with the appropriate state and Federal agencies to establish fire response in SHMA at the same priority as protection of property. Encourage the development and implementation of fire restoration management strategies in SHMA. Strategies should be inclusive of all private and public land managers. These should include, but are not limited to: engagement of all pertinent stakeholders, inventory and monitoring requirements, prioritization approaches, native shrub and herbaceous seeding strategies and sources of seed, vegetation regeneration approaches (to include site-specific management of livestock), approaches to controlling invasive annual grasses, and an adaptive management framework. To minimize the impact of predators to GRSG, encourage the development of a predator management plan in SHMA. Plans should include, but not be limited to: coordination requirements with appropriate state and Federal agencies if implementation of the plan becomes necessary, assessments of habitat conditions and relationships with predator populations and impacts to GRSG, anthropogenic structure design details to reduce opportunities for corvid and raptor perching and nesting, disposal options for anthropogenic food subsidies, approaches for addressing predation from domestic pets, descriptions of concurrent management actions required to address GRSG long-term survival concerns long-term such as habitat enhancement, and monitoring requirements.

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Appendices

APPENDIX 1 – TABLES AND MAPS

APPENDIX 2 – COMPARISON OF PRIOR GREATER SAGE-GROUSE RMP MANAGEMENT DIRECTION WITH APPROVED RMP AMENDMENT

APPENDIX 3 – GREATER SAGE-GROUSE MONITORING FRAMEWORK

APPENDIX 4 – GREATER SAGE-GROUSE HABITAT INDICATORS AND BENCHMARKS

APPENDIX 5 – LIVESTOCK GRAZING BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND DESIGN FEATURES AND SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION

APPENDIX 6 – GLOSSARY

APPENDIX 7 – REFERENCES

APPENDIX 8 – U.S. FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE SECTION 7 CONCURRENCE MEMO

APPENDIX 9 – BLM ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PROCESS

APPENDIX 10 – SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENTS ON THE PROPOSED CHANGES BETWEEN PROPOSED RMPA AND ROD

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